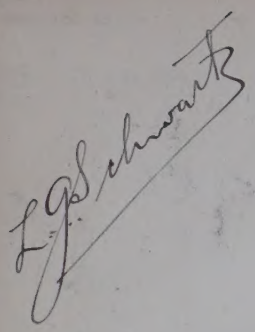
Beautiful Children

C. Haldane McFall



BEAUTIFUL CHILDREN

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IMMORTALISED BY THE MASTERS

BY

C. HALDANE McFALL

WITH 50 REPRODUCTIONS IN COLOUR OF FAMOUS PAINTINGS

Edited by
T. LEMAN HARE

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NOTE

IT *would ill become pen of mine to let this volume go forth without paying tribute to the generous help that has gone to the making of its chief claim to merit. To* Lord Spencer, Lord Crewe, Lord Durham, *and* Lord Lucas *the debt is heavy for the handsome way in which they have placed their treasure at the service of these pages. To the courtesy of the* Keepers *of the* State *collections of the* National Gallery, *the* National Portrait Gallery, *the* Diploma Gallery, *the* Wallace Collection, *and the* Tate—*of the* Louvre *and at* Versailles—*in* Vienna, *in* Berlin, *at* Munich, *at* Turin, *in* Amsterdam, *and at the* Prado, *also my thanks. To* Mr. Martin Hardie *at South Kensington I owe much goodwill and generous assistance. But above all I am bound to acknowledge my debt to my friend* T. Leman Hare, *to whose conception all that is best in the book is due, and without whose enterprise it would never have been completed.*

It is always my aim, since the exact illustration of photography gives so well the main idea of pictures, to write concerning such pictures, as an aid to the full understanding of them, the history of their makers and sitters and their relation to the age that bred them, rather than to attempt an æsthetic estimate of their artistry, which can appeal at best to the few; the more particularly as the few will gain a really true estimate of their artistic value only by close study of the originals. It has ever seemed to me a fatuous effort to try to instil by

words into the senses of others the sensations aroused by a work of art in a magisterial verdict that would assume to lay down the complete and only significance of the achieved work; the history of criticism is one long wreckage of the broken wisdom of such as have essayed the fool's part. Indeed, were it possible, then the painter had had no need to do with colour what words could do as well. There is that in the sensing of works of art in colour that naught else may utter. And the widespread pedantry created by the written estimates of the writers of the past in the minds of worthy people who attempt to judge of great works of art through the spectacles of such as have had sufficient self-sufficiency to utter the final and godlike decision, has created a repulsive form of intellectual falsity and snobbery which has been a warning to me not to add fuel to the abomination.

HALDANE McFALL.

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CHAPTER ONE

CONCERNING THE FLEETING WONDER THAT IS CALLED CHILDHOOD

A CHILD'S discarded toy lay in the grass, maimed and mutilated, the aforetime gay paint worn off it in patches, the plaything of the autumn's violences, the victim of the rude assaults of winter, the ghostly relic of the rains of spring, the bleached and cracked sacrifice to the parching suns of summer — the Symbol of the Years.

And as I lifted tenderly the pallid fragment of that once gaily bedecked puppet, that had brought laughter and merriment to the happy little one, it seemed to me that across the grass came running joyously, eager with graceful clumsiness, the exquisitely fashioned Child who had trampled over my heart with dear delightful tyrannies, and refused with large eyes of wonder and red lips of reckless logic to understand any protest — except that I was her footstool. She would wear my man's hat on her golden hair, my shortest coat trailing a full foot behind her — for she, like most womenfolk, would play the man for awhile in dramatic moments — and I would stand a-wonder that my commonplace apparel could show so beautiful.

Beautiful Children

The Child leaps into our arms out of such a wondrous mystery — a sudden miracle; to pass again, almost before the rubbing of bewildered eyes, into that other miracle of Youth, where Confidence gives way to Criticism.

The irrevocable hours flit by, that no man's hand may stem for the blinking of an eyelid, and the little one that ran so deliciously clumsily, with all the awkward grace of young things, vanishes only too soon into the ethereal void of Yesterday — and whether Death, in wilful cruelty, takes the precious thing, or youth and prime engulf it, the exquisite blossom is flown, like very fluff of thistledown, away into the backward mists haunted by the shadows of the Things that are Gone, and its place knows it no more — so heartless a reaper is unseen Time.

A broken fragment of a toy, some little sock or frail fairy shift of gossamer tissue, fantastically, ridiculously small, remains to wring the heart where the empty nursery is haunted with the memory of the joys and sweet delights, and shadowed with the ambitions and hopes that, in our folly, we wasted precious time in weaving about the little laughing One, when we had been better employed seizing the blithe companionship of every flitting moment of its being that the clock was ticking away, content just to enjoy the glory of the miracle as it Was.

What wealth it were to possess from some Master's hand the record of a child that has been The Child to us! Each year so differing in winsomeness; and each year a world apart. It has been given to some favoured children of the bygone years thus to be made immortal — been granted to us that this single page should have been torn out of the record of their wayfaring,

and such passing glimpse caught and recorded for ever. And as we look upon each such recorded child, there comes to us a strange wonder as to what was the end of all. Did this smiling one live on so smiling, or did tragedy skulk in the wings of the drama where the frame cuts off the scene? Was this princely little one to walk the whole way a handsome princely figure of a man; or was he to prove a vulgar fellow in the marrow, and black at heart, as lies are black? Did this little maid marry a beautiful prince and live happy ever afterwards?—or was this but the sunlit moment that goes before the unlovely bondage to a vicious youth ending in as unlovely old age?

As the Masters saw them, so they limned them. And if, without unseemly insolence, we may turn over the pages of the little ones' after-years here and there, and peep into their destinies, it will not be without interest; for all of them, at least whilst childhood was their realm, promised more than interestingly well to strut a pretty part in the tragi-comedy of life that the pen of Destiny was writing for them; and if the Dramatist proved a sorry bungler of a playwright after so fine an opening to the play, and failed to write fitting lines for them to which to strut it, yet, when all's said, he gave them a good cue on which to take the stage.

Beauty may be but skin-deep, as the wiseacres have it; and skin-deep beauty may not be the possession of all the children who walk these pages; but, in the recording of them all, no master's hand has faltered from mastery, nor is their varying skill of hand to be too rigorously compared, since each has done astounding well what, likely enough, none other of them all had done half so well.

Beautiful Children

There is more than one famous child-picture that should have had its place in these pages, but that the possessors were reluctant — and we must respect a prejudice which may have pious foundations. Whistler's *Miss Alexander*, surely the very fascinating Alice of Wonderland! refused to attend the party; and Gainsborough's hackneyed but famous *Blue Boy* hung back. However, owners have been charmingly generous; and no one picture of a child is so supreme that others cannot rival it. The treasure has been so vast, it has been a very toil to winnow gems from gems.

CHAPTER TWO

THE COMING OF THE CHILD INTO THE KINGDOM OF ART

THE Child. Surely of God's wide activities, the most exquisite performance! Yet the Greeks, for all their cult of Beauty, scarce discovered it! To the ancients, the entity of childhood, the strange mystery of its short duration of splendour, meant little — or their mighty art must have recorded it, even if in halting fashion. At any rate, the petty dread of the idolatry of graven beauty kept skilled hands from the carving or limning of the Child, as of all else, amongst the Jewish and Arab peoples; whilst Assyria and Egypt strangely overlooked the beauty of childhood, and its mystery and vast significance. Nor did Greece do much better, her exquisite vision being bent on the beauty of the perfected adult, whether the beauty of manhood or the glamour of women — on ripe and completed things. Rome's art was largely bastard stuff, founded on that of Greece at second-hand, not wholly lacking in splendour, if not greatly original. Cupid, the love-god Eros of the Greeks, got to peeping out here and there from amongst the sculpturings; but he misses much of infancy. The boy is scarce

the innocent little one; rather indeed is he the make-believe child of Cunning, confident of Venus's collusion and unashamed of her questionable loves.

It was out of the Jewish blood, fantastically enough, with its black hatred of graven images, that was to come the supreme incident out of which was created an Art over Europe which should spread abroad the profound dignity of Motherhood and create honours for the Child — for the fragrant legend of the Mother of God and of the helpless Infant in the manger was to usurp the imagination of the world, and raise Childhood to the throne of men's contemplation.

The pregnant Jewish incident, banished out of the land that gave it birth, came into a crumbling civilisation that made fertile ground for its growth and blossoming within the sun-flooded walls of Constantinople, that they called Byzantium — though Byzantine art was the slave of a mere convention of glowing colours and of a hidebound tradition that not only had Eastern eyes with little love of nature, but that feared, when it did not despise, nature. Through Byzantium into Italy it came thus hidebound in tradition, in swaddling clothes as perhaps befitted the newly born, turning its eyes askance from nature as from an unholy thing; it came ignoring the wonder and purity and reality of childhood, forgetful, in its arrogance of holiness, that the Master whom it affected to adore had approved the Child in the awful splendour of the immortal phrase that rings down the centuries: "of such is the Kingdom of Heaven." Nevertheless, it came into Italy out of Byzantium, with potential force in it that was to transform the Western World.

The priestly fiat went forth that the Child was to be painted as a little manikin, since to paint Him as a real child were an "irreverence"! So fantastic is the human! The Roman Church broke away from the Greek, and the first great religious schism of the religion of Christianity brought life to Christian Art.

When, out of the mediæval Darkness, showed the first glimmer of the Dawn of the Renaissance, no man may exactly tell — it was not at the striking of the hour of a clock. But before the dawn stands Cimabue, painting a manikin for Infant — that Cimabue whose picture his fellow-citizens carried in procession through Florence. Cimabue, in his walks abroad amongst the grassy hills, finds a peasant lad of ten years old, tending sheep, drawing one such sheep upon a stone; Cimabue takes the ten-year-old boy, who is to become famous as Giotto, to his Florentine studio, and trains him, giving thereby a master to Italy who has *seen* nature. Giotto begins to attempt the statement that an infant is not a manikin, though tradition cramps his fingers — yet he has discovered that the sky is blue. Then came monkish Fra Angelico and Fra Filippo Lippi, seeing as truly as their religion would let them; then Lippi's wonderful pupil Botticelli, "the reanimate Greek," whose conventional fattening of the infant was at any rate a move towards real infancy within limits, and better at least than a manikin. Botticelli and Botticelli's pupil, Filippino Lippi (son of Botticelli's master, Lippi), as well as Pollajuolo, Verrocchio, Ghirlandajo, and Verrocchio's pupil, Leonardo da Vinci, all drew close to the Child. But, alas! with Ghirlandajo's pupil, Michael Angelo, and with Raphael, and their school, was to come in the convention of the grand manner, the distortions of

"grace," to smooth out just what is most exquisitely infantile, to contort it, and to rob the bodies of infants of their innocence in order to thrust them towards the aping of adult postures again.

Yet, vast as was the genius of Europe devoted to the limning of the Child in the arms of the Mother; majestic as were the gifts of artists in their achievement of the art of Italy, nevertheless, just as the picturing of the manhood of the Christ baffled their powers — unless, indeed, we except the inspiration of Guido Reni, by no means the greatest of them, but who alone of them all drew a head worthy of the subject — so, though the Madonna was not quite so wholly unsuccessful in their hands, and the Infant at times not without perfection of infancy, the heavy task of creating a worthy Mother and Child, fit to be worshipped as Godhood, cramped even the mightiest hands; and it was not to be until artists were content to treat the character of children merely as children, that the art of painting the Child blossomed to its fulness.

It is true that the Italians, here and there — as though once in their lives it were to be granted to them that the Child should be revealed to them in all its exquisite truth — painted a real Child, just as the Greeks were not wholly able to keep their skill from pedantry when they got a-playing with little Cupids amongst their sculpturings; but, as a habit, their children are lacking in the full truth of childhood, being at first little more than miniatures of the grown-ups, or affecting the manners, ways, and attitudes of the grown-ups, which no infant is or does, being, on the contrary, of shape and form wholly different and most markedly unlike. It is true that, of the Italians, one

Luca della Robbia, an immortal spirit, astoundingly modern and for all time — he who, having modelled in clay, baked it into the pottery of terra-cotta, enamelled it, and with fire wrought colour upon the enamel that is as lasting in its beauty of pigment as porcelain, and as wholly precious as jewels; an invention that bears his name of Della Robbia pottery to this day — he, Luca della Robbia, gave to the world such perfect and unforgettable children as you shall find in his several famous works of a *Child with Flowers and Fruit*, in which infancy is truly and exquisitely expressed. After Luca della Robbia came Andrea della Robbia; nor must we forget Donatello, and Jacopo della Quercia, and Rossellino with his little laughing Christ. But these, like Luca della Robbia, were sculptors — and the modelling of forms, the interpretation of life in the round solid form of sculpture, came to perfection of artistry long before the painted picture, which requires slow development of the tricks of handling that conquer the vision — deception of the eye by creating the figure and objects in colour as if they were not on the flat, but as though a modelled figure stood before us, the relation in perspective, the values of a colour in relation to its distance in the enveloping air that alters colour almost as much as the light that is upon it; and the like manifold difficulties of illusion that the painter had slowly to discover. Besides, the art of sculpture came, fully mastered, from the Greeks and the ages; whilst painting itself was a very child of Art.

The which, as far as the painting of children concerns us, sounds in a fashion more of an apology than an eulogy of the great Italians — as indeed without injustice it most rightly is;

for, of a truth, considering the dominant place that the Mother and Child held in the eye of the Italian years, the true record of the Child is meagre enough. We are wont to stand astounded before the vast artistic achievement of Italy; but when one remembers that the world could not read, that pictures were the direct appeal to the illiterate peoples, had it not been rather a wonder if they had *not* painted well? It is the habit of pedantry to pour praise upon all that the Italians wrought; indeed they wrought much, and most wondrously, and vastly well; but for all their mastery, we might almost dismiss the Child from their accomplishment and be little the poorer.

Here and there a master won to high success — a rare Botticelli; as rare a Ghirlandajo; a child's face that peeps out from a Filippino Lippi; an angel by Rosso, or a singing seraph by Fra Bartolommeo; or Bordone's boy with feather in cap — the Venetians coming nearer to the great art, Giovanni Bellini, Carpaccio's child playing a lute in *The Presentation*, Tintoretto, Paolo Veronese, and the sumptuous Titian in his *Garden of the Loves*. But the old-time bookish critics of praise, bound by tradition to account the Italian genius supreme, overtopping all else, were so hard put to it to establish the Italians in the foremost rank as interpreters of childhood, that reverently, and with well-sustained awe in their approach, they poured eulogy upon all Raphael's splendidly academic endeavours, wherein the Infant is chiefly remarkable for the very lack of the fascinating essentials of infancy that Luca della Robbia knew and understood so well; indeed, are they not the rather remarkable for those very uninfantlike attitudes of adoration and such like adult

intellectualities that destroy the innocence and reality of the children of the art of Italy? Even in the great *Sistine Madonna*, the Child's hands lack in their form and fingers just that "dinkiness," as women call it in their delightfully apt jargon, just that fascinating plumpness and dimpledom that are above all falsities of infancy such as kneelings and prayings and giving of papal benedictions; whilst even here we have the rolled plumpnesses and creasings of the little legs smoothed out to the Raphaelesque ideal of "grace." Even here, throughout the whole picture, down to the baby-angels at the foot of all, we feel that Raphael is ever more concerned with style and the grand manner than with the truth of infancy.

Throughout Italian painting, then, we shall find the Child standing or acting or moving as an adult. The Italians invented a Child. They were without vision for the reality of infancy or of childhood — they mitigated it, almost as though they apologised for the splendour. They created attitudes and poses into which they bent and contorted the supple limbs of infants — into which no child falls. Infancy does not lie. They put upon infants acts wholly foreign to infancy. They held little communion with the spirit of childhood; they had no respect for their godlike simplicity; and they were blind to their graceful awkwardnesses and their quaint beauty of movement. What more serious proof could be brought against the Italian vision than that from their art the girl-child, one of the most exquisite of nature's designs, is almost absent — as it is absent from the poetry and literature of the whole age throughout all Europe from end to end?

Worst of all, they put sadness upon the child; steeped it in

that fantastic melancholy which is supposed to be the solemn and proper spirit for religious thought; as if Religion ought not to be a vast gaiety and splendour! As if, indeed, that merriest morsel of the divine in the human, the Child, were not the happiest, most blithe essence of jocundity; and thereby above all things fitted to symbolise all that is best in man's thought, and aim, and forthright endeavour!

The Sixteen-hundreds had to strike — nay, the very distant Americas had first to be discovered out of vast immensities far beyond men's experience of the vague seas — before they discovered the real Child. So blindly do we overlook the Obvious that plays about our feet, and clutches at our knees, and laughs upwards at us.

Then was Art content with the *fact* of the Child — the proportions of infancy — the large head, the long plump body, the fat legs creased with chubbiness, having *promise* of walking but not yet given to it, far less to attitudinisings — the fascinating plumpness of the fingers and wrist and hand: above all — and how one looks for it in vain amongst most of the Italian painters — the babe's mouth, with the full sucking upper lip. All so unlike the grown-ups.

For men, hard put to it as we are all hard put to it to shake off evil habits in which we are born, began very cautiously to fling the blighting cult of "grace" and "manner" out of the window, and painted children as children, just for sheer love of the business. The Northern folk started to paint late, and discovered that the Child was not a manikin, fattened out, with full cheeks and a few creases; but a glory apart. The Flemish and Dutch and Hol-

bein's stiff but astoundingly true draughtsmanship led the Northern art to truth — and the Northern genius for portraiture and character and love of home did the rest. It was the home-loving Flemish and Dutch who crowned the achievement — their home their religion. Rubens in full-blooded frankness of vision caught the action of children; and as Rubens caught the innocent vulgarity of children, so his pupil Van Dyck caught their good-breeding! Rembrandt painted them with his mighty skill all too seldom; and even more rarely, Frans Hals's mightiest masterpieces contain them.

So the real Child emerged.

First of all, stiffly arrayed as little princes and princesses out of Spain, where Velazquez, long before he had learnt any lesson from Titian and Tintoretto, had bettered it, and out of the Netherlands, the Dutch and Flemish lands, demurely dressed for the part — and overdressed — they came. But soon they flung off clothes and romped on to the painted canvas, laughing, blithe, gay, full of naked innocence, making painting a frolic with their jollity and the whole field of art to blossom like a garden. At once the painted picture took on a melody, singing-birds were in every bough; gay airs blew across the painted surface of men's invention.

So that, by the eighteenth century, the Child triumphed; and infancy came into its kingdom, and Sir Joshua Reynolds and Chardin reached to their bays.

It is the habit of the bookish critic to charge the eighteenth century with superficiality and convention as being its very soul, not without a hint of pedantry. If so, what shall be their indictment against the painters of children in Italy?

Beautiful Children

Ruskin, ever ready to create laws to suit his suppositions, laid down the dogma that the art of Greece gives us no conception of Greek children, but that "the sanctity of womanhood worshipped in the Madonna, and the sanctity of childhood in unity with that of Christ, became the light of every honest hearth, and the joy of every pure and chastened soul." This may be. But the Madonna and Child, for all the Italians' striving, strange to say, did not create the greatest paintings of children; the great Italians came and departed. It was only when later masters came to paint children as children, when their portraiture became their aim, that the painting of childhood was raised to its supreme achievement by the genius of the Spaniards, Velazquez and Murillo, and by that of the Flemings and Dutchmen, Rubens and Frans Hals and Rembrandt and Van Dyck and their peers — from whom Peter Lely learnt to limn them with all their charm as few Italians ever saw them; and so on until our own Sir Joshua Reynolds raised the art to such splendid fulfilment, whilst the Frenchmen Boucher and Fragonard and Lagillière, and their companions, caught all their fragrance and allure and set these subtleties with dainty skill upon the painted canvas, arousing indeed the ill-will of the pedant Diderot, who scowled to see Boucher's little ones joying in their infancy, and blamed the loose morals of his age that could look with approbation upon a child happy in being alive when it had been better employed in "picking flax" or stooping over the drudgery of lessons!

The delight in children has grown, and grows. To-day the Child sits on the thrones of the masters; and his childhood is his glory — neither his apology nor his shame.

CHAPTER THREE

WHEREIN WE SEE THE LAMP OF ART
SET AFLAME IN FLANDERS

THE Italian genius, then, concerned itself with the painting of the Child in order but to create a type; and this chiefly for the purpose of fulfilling a part in the decorative scheme for the glorification of the high altar of the churches —leaving aside always Della Robbia and another sculptor or so. In painting, when all's said, the whole aim was to set up this type. And the resulting Child was at best but a smoothening out of the very qualities that go to the fascination of childhood —this was done of necessity to their eyes, in order that Godhood should hover about the Infant. It was of a truth but man's conception of dignity; as though the simplicity and very naivety of childhood, created by the Master-Craftsman of the world, were not its most consummate dignity.

This type-making, inherent in the classic aim throughout all art, makes for the destruction of Character — being a splendid annulling of the *differences* that create character, exactly those differences which give their charm to the individual; yet this setting aside of character, so far from being a fault, must be

accepted as an essential in creating the type. Thus, even as we pass by the achievement of Italy in the portrayal of children, the ignoring is no suggested charge of guiltiness, since it were unjust to condemn a man for doing but clumsily what he had no intention to do at all. In frank terms, the Italians were not greatly intent on stating childhood as childhood — it was enough for them that they should create, in the pseudo-classic intention that inspired their whole achievement, a handsome formula that should stand for childhood, for The Child. Blot out from their greatest canvases the rest of the design, and the Child that is left to us you shall never mistake for anything but the infancy of God. Standing before this Child, there floats to us the fragrance of incense, the solemn peal of the organ, the chanting of prayers, the voice of the priest; the ceremonial of worship forthwith haunts the imagination, and the knee bends in homage to something afar and beyond infancy — we are in the presence of a wondrous Symbol.

The Italian, of a truth, did not reach the heights in the portrayal of childhood; ever to them one Child was supreme, with the little Baptist as companion on occasion; and these, with chance excursions into the dreamland of Cupids or of little infant angels, were the end, to them, of the artistic significance of the Child. And, strange to say, it was exactly in proportion as they shed the necessity for Godhood from the Child, as they freed themselves of the stupendous difficulty of the task and wandered in the realm of Cupids and infant angels, that they came nearest to discovering childhood.

It was to them of the Gothic blood, to the peoples whose whole art and glory are deep-rooted in character, who give the

bays to character above all other human qualities, however rugged the body wherein that character flames — it was to them who founded their genius on the individual as against the classic ideal that seeks beauty alone, through perfection of type — it was to the North, and, by some strange whim of fate, to Spain — her art so akin to the art of the North — that the Child, the real Child, revealed itself. In all its reality, its sublime simplicity, its fascination, and its naive essence, it stepped forth and smilingly revealed itself, putting out its little hands to the rugged folk who asked nothing of it but that it should be a Child. The rude, rugged North! Just as it was in the North, and Spain with the North, that portraiture came to its supreme achievement. For, always in the art of the North you will see this basic adoration of character — the tribute to the *difference* of individuals. Their art, their religion, their whole state is founded upon it, grows in it, has blossomed upon it.

Watch the exquisite agonies of the pencil of the North — see how the eager eye of the North guides the brush — searching out each little difference of each different feature in everything upon which it looks. With what fastidious care, even when the brush sweeps with forthright mastery over the canvas, the hand and eye follow each form that pronounces Character — whether of a Dutch bottle, an apple, the cattle in the fields, the mood of the hour, as well as the distinction of men.

And as with all the Northern blood, in all its many diffusions, the setting of character upon the altars of its living faith modified the very creeds of the North, and made the same God differ, as differ white and black and scarlet and gold, from the God

of the South; so differed the art of the North from the art of Italy and of Greece.

It was to the Flemish and Dutch genius, concerned with the home life, whether of the rich or the poor, rather than with the elaborate splendour of Courts or the gospels interpreted in the spirit of Courts, that we owe the real beginnings of the artist's interest in children as children.

From the end of the Thirteen-hundreds, from the hour that the lands just south of the Rhine — Flanders or such part of Flanders as we now know as Belgium — came under the sceptre of the Dukes of Burgundy, who warmed with the sun of their approval the art of their people, so that it burst into bud and leaf at Bruges and Ghent under the tillage of the VAN EYCKS (the brothers who discovered the use of oil-colours in such fashion as to employ its pigments the one on the other whilst still wet upon the panel, melting the tones together, and thereby giving us the "easel picture" for the home), we shall find the sanity of the North freed from the falsity that art is beauty, or in any way solely concerned with beauty, but the rather with the statement of the sensations of life to the eyes, seen through the sense of colour. At once, even so early as this "primitive" searching after expression in art, the achievement of the North concerned itself with Character.

As far back as Flemish GOSSAERT DE MABUSE, born in Flanders, at Maubeuge in the Hainault, about 1470, the Flemish art displays in his polished, detailed, and careful brush this interest in character, even in the presence of childhood, as you may discover in the little lady *Jacqueline de Bourgogne*, now to be seen

amidst our national treasure. And it is fitting that the face of a child of the princely House of Burgundy, the culture and sumptuous taste of which made the sun that warmed to life and blossoming the art of Flanders, should be the first design that gives colour to this Flemish record of childhood in art.

Jan Gossaert, so called of Mabuse, despite his stay in Italy, put from him neither the Northern truth of vision in portraiture nor the Northern exquisiteness of touch. He eventually became Court-painter to Philip of Burgundy, afterwards Bishop of Utrecht. Mabuse was of that Antwerp school of Flemish men who succeeded to the domination of Flemish art when Bruges relapsed — of that school of painters that brought to the Flemish art, at the coming of QUINTEN MASSYS, the blacksmith's son of Louvain, friend of Erasmus and Dürer, the increased sense of the action and movement of drama, of light and shade, and of colour. True man of Antwerp JAN GOSSAERT proved himself; and in Antwerp he died in 1541, as the school of his city was passing away. Many are the works falsely set down to the skill of his hand; but this quaint and charming *Jacqueline de Bourgogne* is not of the impostors; nor is the group of the *Three Children of Christian II., King of Denmark*, at Hampton Court.

Farther north, in the cities of the Netherlands, the early Dutchmen were now creating their "primitive" art: personal in style that art, and untouched even by the artistry of their southern Flemish neighbours, however akin to it — forerunners, these early Dutchmen, and evolvers of that mighty Dutch achievement that was to burst into full flower in the Sixteen-hundreds and to be a chief part of the triumph of the age. They showed

from the first, the Dutch, that love of landscape that was to create the spirit of the master landscape-painters of the world; and that realistic sense of the everyday doings of the workaday life that we associate with the glory of Dutch art. Nor was grim humour denied them; not even the satiric gift of caricature.

In Germany also a primitive school of artists was arising; though here, as in the Flemish and Dutch cities, the Child was not yet much seen except in the altarpiece — DÜRER, the goldsmith's son of Nuremberg, born the year after Mabuse; GRÜNEWALD, who died about 1530, a couple of years after Dürer; ALTDORFER, born at Augsburg about 1480, who had a keen sense of the character of children, the more particularly of the street urchin — indeed, did he not employ the urchin freely as mischievous little angels? and his very Child with the Madonna is not free from the love of mischief of the tribe. Then came that other mightiest Augsburger, HANS HOLBEIN the younger, son of a Hans Holbein himself of no mean artistry — Hans Holbein the younger, who, born at Augsburg in 1497, was to die of the plague and leave his bones in London town in 1543, after painting most of England's celebrities of the days of bluff King Hal of the many wives — of which bluff King Hal he became the Court-painter; and who painted the daughter of Christian II. of Denmark, who grew up to be Duchess of Milan and to live immortal through Holbein's brush — she whom Mabuse had painted as a child, and whom Henry the Eighth's gadding fancy came near to changing from widowhood to uneasy queenship of England as one of his wives. You may see her thus grown

up as the young widowed Duchess of Milan in the painting by Holbein that hangs in the National Gallery.

Thus the lamp of Art, borne into Flanders, set ablaze a beacon-light over Bruges and Antwerp and Holland, and spread its gleam athwart Germany, gilding the turrets of Cologne and Nuremberg and Augsburg, and glittering upon Swiss Basle — to be borne at last across the narrow seas to London town.

CHAPTER FOUR

WHEREIN IS MUCH SIGNIFICANCE TO ART IN THE SILTING OF THE WATERS THAT FLOW BY THE CITY OF BRUGES

WE have seen the cradle of Flemish Art to have been rocked in the city of Bruges. But there was to come a mishap to Bruges, as to her art, in unforeseen fashion. As the Fourteen-hundreds ran out, chimed by her many bells, the sands ran in, and, with much mud, silted up the waters that flowed under the bridges of the old city. With the shallowing of her river, her old-time greatness passed away from her to Antwerp, her rival in Flanders, whether in art or wealth. So her ancient prosperity deserted her; and her mighty trade went to Antwerp city; indeed, as the Fourteen-hundreds ran out, fortune poured out her largesse to Antwerp in astounding profusion, so that she increased enormously in riches; and during the Fifteen-hundreds her commercial might was near as vast as that of famed Venice, from which city upon the waters art and wealth were to depart by the time that Tintoretto died in 1594.

Suddenly, out of the blue, fell what looked like ruin and disaster upon Antwerp as well as upon Bruges. Flanders passed

to Spain, and became a part of the Spanish Netherlands in 1555 —and the awful hell of the Inquisition was let loose upon her thrifty citizens. And in this wise. The Princes of the House of Burgundy, as we have seen, were not only Lords of Burgundy, but of Flanders and Holland, amongst other wide domains. The Netherlands passed to the House of Hapsburg with Mary, daughter of Charles the Bold, on her marriage with the Emperor of Germany, Maximilian; and, through her son Philip the Handsome, eventually to Philip the Second of Spain in 1555. The diverse peoples, languages, and forms of government of the seventeen Provinces of the Netherlands foreboded no easy government for any man. They were about as prickly a gift as the gods could have flung even into the lap of a man of the North, brought up to respect difference of character, and to rule men by the due encouraging of such differences to give of their best to the State. To the narrow-eyed Philip the Second of Spain, his soul black with the sin and crimes of beating the brains of men into one narrow formula, the gift came as molten iron poured into his lap. Nor did his contempt for his Flemish peoples augur well for their comfort—or his. He at once fell foul of his Netherlanders; and his haughty and contemptuous and brutal acts towards them lost him their allegiance from the beginning.

Thirteen years after Philip came into this thorny heritage—an unlucky number as the gossips have it—in 1568, he committed the unlucky blunder of sending the brutal and bigoted Duke of Alva to rule over them. But the King of Spain had entered upon an act which was to shatter the power of Spain through-

out the world. What looked like disaster for the Netherlands was the salvation of Holland and of Flanders. It welded the people together into an iron unity. In 1559, Count Egmont had raised the people to revolt in a fierce struggle to fling off the Spanish tyranny and to rid the nation of the Inquisition. The land was torn with the bitter and ruthless strife for freedom. The blind fury of the Calvinistic iconoclasts a few years later (1566), who went about destroying the works of art in the churches (which led to so many being covered over with a coat of black and the ten commandments painted on the black in order to preserve the masterpieces from destruction), and the sending of the infamous Duke of Alva to rule over the land and stamp out rebellion, made of the Netherlands a vast cockpit of war for religious and political freedom. Egmont, with Count Horn, was put to death in 1568. The execution of these two great patriots goaded the people to further fury. The cruelty and murderous tyranny of the Duke of Alva, and his insane ferocity, roused the hatred of the Catholics as it had done that of the Protestants; and by 1572 the whole country from end to end was in open and merciless revolt under the Prince of Orange, William the Silent, then on the edge of forty. The following year of 1573 saw Alva leave Flanders for ever. Three years later, his successor, De Requesens, was dead of the fever. On the 8th of November 1576, the Northern and Southern Provinces entered into the close alliance of the Pacification of Ghent, vowed to driving the Spaniard into the sea. The rigorous and merciless orders issued by Philip the Second utterly failed. And three years later the Seven Northern Provinces ratified the

treaty of Ghent by the treaty of Utrecht, whereby they swore mutual defence with life, goods, and blood against the Spaniard; and in the doing thereby created the Dutch Republic of the Netherlands, wholly repudiating all allegiance to Philip. On the 5th of July in 1581 the Seven United Provinces issued their Declaration of Independence; William the Silent, Prince of Orange, became sovereign over the land; and on his being foully assassinated at Delft on the 10th of July 1584, three years afterwards, his son Maurice was elected to reign over the Dutch in his stead. Flanders alone remained a sullen part of the Spanish realm, and in a state of rebellion.

Now it so happened that, when the Spanish blight fell upon Flanders, there was living in Antwerp a magistrate, a strange fellow to be judging his sinning fellow-men, one Jan Rubens by name. Our worthy Jan came of a family of honest burgesses of the city — he was son of an apothecary who also owned a grocery. But Jan had social ambition that was to lead him into strange adventures: he studied the law; went on the grand tour, and became the "travelled man"; then settled down and married a merchant's daughter, the noble-souled Maria Pypelincks. He seems to have attempted in his single person the old Scots manœuvre (whereby one member of the family fought for the Stuart and one for the English, in order that, whatever the fortunes of war, the estates should remain in the family); for he had played with Calvinism until the Spaniard came, when his conscience thought better of it, and, publicly professing his "error," he made submission to Spain and to the Catholic faith. But when Alva came into Flanders, the worthy fellow seems to have

grown nervous as to the amount of the true faith that he would be made to swallow, or Alva's suspicious eyes had got to examining his earlier jugglings with Calvinism, or the magistrate blinked, baffled at the difficulty of choice; at any rate, on Alva's coming into Flanders, Jan Rubens deemed it best to get packing, and 1568 saw him leave Antwerp hurriedly and set off to Cologne. He was certainly suspected of the heresies. Of a truth it was a puzzling business for a man of social ambition to decide as to which side to be with. And that he henceforth played with Calvinism again is likely, as we shall see later. Whatsoever "errors" he repudiated, or faith he set upon his altars, he soon made Cologne as uncomfortable for himself as was his native Flanders. At Cologne was living Anna of Saxony, queen to William of Orange, the great leader of the Dutch rebellion; she was one of William the Silent's few mistakes. The magistrate of social ambition that had scorned the apothecary's shop, and of uncertain religions, became her lover: the affair was soon no great secret — nor, had it been one, could it have been kept, since the royal lady became a mother. She went to Siegen for the event; and worthy Jan Rubens hurriedly followed to the same town. But Count Johann of Nassau, brother to William of Orange, was lord of the land, and promptly had him arrested and flung into prison. The penalty was death. The life of Jan Rubens was in Nassau's hand; but the wife of Rubens now showed the noble qualities of which she was made, and which the man of social ambitions had naturally overlooked when a queen stooped to beckon. She begged his life from Nassau, not greatly inclined for the

scandal of a sister-in-law having found a lover in the apothecary's son to be published in the heroics of a public execution; and the worthy Jan Rubens escaped the scaffold. She brought him back to freedom, and forgave him in letters that are noble reading to this day. At Siegen, after two years of prison life, he was allowed to live in open arrest. And whether at Antwerp or Cologne or Siegen, we might have let him and his scandal go unrecorded and forgot, and the world had given him or his cares and rise on the social ladder but small thought, had it not been that at Siegen was born to him on the 28th day of June in 1577, being the eve of the day of Saints Peter and Paul, a boy-child, whom they christened PETER PAUL RUBENS, who was to make the name of Rubens illustrious and immortal, and to walk by right in that high social circle the road towards which our worthy Jan had found so stony a wayfaring.

The child inherited the great soul of his mother. The small Peter Paul being a few months old, his father and mother asked for and obtained leave to go back to Cologne — indeed William of Orange was happily remarried, Anna of Saxony being not only divorced but dead. To Cologne the Rubens family went forthwith, and there the child grew to boyhood and was being educated when, in his tenth year, he lost his father. His mother, having embraced the Catholic faith, was allowed to return with her family to Antwerp in 1587, where, after a couple of years of good schooling, the eager bright lad was soon the master of seven languages. 'Twixt twelve and thirteen, under his mother's shrewd guidance, the boy entered a princely house as page,

and picked up the courtly manner so needful for worldly success in his day. At thirteen, bound apprentice to his mother's kinsman, the landscape-painter Tobias Verhaecht, he went therefrom to the studio of Adam van Noort for the four years from fifteen to nineteen: at nineteen he went to the courtier and aristocrat Otto van Veen for four further years until, at twenty-three, in the spring of 1600, he took the road that leads to Venice, where he set himself to the study of the art of Titian (who had died the year before Rubens came into the world) and of Paolo Veronese, now dead some twelve years, but whose splendid inspiration remained, to create the sumptuous art of Peter Paul Rubens — and, through Rubens, the blossoming of the Flemish art and all that was most vivid in the art of France, and to fire the creative genius of England.

Rubens at twenty-three was already shaped and marked out for the society of the great. He was a born courtier. A cultured man of many languages, a witty and bright companion, and even thus early a painter of prodigious promise, he soon attracted the friendship of Vincenzo Gonzaga, Duke of Mantua, who not only became his patron but his intimate; and with whom, in the October of this 1600 in which he arrived in Venice, Rubens went to Florence to the marriage by proxy of Marie de Médicis, second wife and queen to Henry IV. of France — she whose marriage Rubens was to glorify twenty years afterwards in the long sequence of huge paintings that hang upon the walls of the Louvre to-day, planned and largely worked upon by him from his designs. From Florence Rubens wandered to the other great Italian cities, wheresoever works of art by the great dead attracted, until in 1603, in

his twenty-sixth year, he undertook his first essay in diplomacy, being sent to the Court of Philip the Third of Spain by the Duke of Mantua, his patron. Rubens was by gift specially dowered for state-craft; and, eagerly as he took to the subtle business, he went into the intricacies of the intrigues of Courts with the prodigious advantage of an unofficial standing, his acts covered by his calling of artist. Received in Spain with the highest honour, his reputation as artist was also greatly increased.

Returning to Italy in the following year, for four years, Rubens turned his face homewards towards Antwerp in his thirty-first year (1608), hurrying thither at the news of his mother's illness, but arriving too late ever to see her again. The blow was a very heavy one to the bereaved man, and left his affectionate nature haunted by a sense of loneliness.

The following year, being thirty-two, he married his first wife, Isabella Brant, a handsome girl of eighteen — she of whom he handsomely, if unchivalrously to her sex, said that "she lacked every one of the faults of her sex"; and whom he painted, seated beside him, lover-like, in that superb portrait at Munich, which is amongst the most sumptuous and masterly works of his hands.

On the death of Philip the Second of Spain in 1598, his son Philip the Third had handed over the Spanish Netherlands to the Archduke Albrecht of Austria and his wife the Infanta Isabella. Rubens was made Court-painter by the astute Duke, who wished to keep him at Antwerp.

Rubens, now secure of a great position and career in the art of his age and of his people; Court-painter to the Archduke Albrecht,

Governor of the Spanish Netherlands, and to his wife the Infanta Isabella, daughter of Philip the Second of Spain; on intimate terms with the great — he could without hesitation build in 1611, upon the ground he had purchased, the house in Antwerp which he was to make famous.

To him was born in 1611 his first child; and from thenceforth playful infants toddle on to his canvases, and gambol through his art, and take flight as Cupids across his design. An astounding colourist, gifted with a mighty sense of arrangement, painting with a Rabelaisian joy of life, seeing the intensity of things with the intensity and rude health of the strong man destined to success, Rubens's violent art and his full-blooded manner of stating it, drew a wide net round the human tragi-comedy, and into it he swept the limning of the little ones, and added their fragrant charm to his large enterprise. Infants, winged as Cupids or angels, and unwinged, painted for the sheer delight in the fascination of their infancy and their form, frolic and rollick and gambol across his canvases at the slightest excuse. His joyous and restless art often enough painted men and women with coarse vision and bold immodest hand; yet, at the same time, over all and through all is breathed a strangely paradoxical atmosphere of the grand manner, of courtly grace, of sumptuous splendour as of the accent of palaces. So also in his children, full-fleshed and heavy of body and limb though they be, they are compact of childhood, of the individuality of children — and are wholly free from that planing down into the type-child that he did well to reject from his art when he went to school in Italy. The Flemish blood, that coursed so hotly in his veins, kept him from that

falsity. Frank to brutality, his brush at least records real children, even though he force their clumsiness and miss something of their grace. In the famous picture of *Fruitfulness,* or, as it is sometimes called, *Infants with a Garland of Fruit,* at Munich, we see him painting one of his masterpieces, urged to it by that love of allegory which has been the destruction of so many promising artistic careers, but which served Rubens to such splendid purpose. Here we have his fine sense of decoration, his vivid touch, his quick instinct in giving life to the painted form. The fruit, so luscious and juicy and rich in the handling, is said to have been painted by his friend Brueghel; but the touch and handling and colour, the lusciousness and liquid lighting, are to be found in his own sketches for the Whitehall Banqueting Room; and these were solely the work of his own hands.

Rubens's portraits of children, seen in such masterpieces as the charming *Lady and Child* (being his wife Isabella Brant and his eldest son Albrecht when an infant) at Dresden; the exquisitely rendered *Head of a Girl Child* (Rubens's eldest daughter) at Vienna; the well-known *Virgin and Infant Christ in a Wreath of Flowers* (wherein Isabella Brant and the boy Albrecht are the Madonna and Child Christ, within the surrounding wreath of nude infants) are all of these happy years.

Rubens was forty-three when Marie de Médicis summoned him to Paris to paint that series of large pictures for the beautifying of the Palace of the Luxembourg that now hang in the Louvre—eighteen of his original sketches are at Munich—and during the five years in which he was engaged upon them in Paris it was that he met George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, who saw

in him not only a mighty painter but a discreet and skilful diplomat.

But 1626, scarce a year after the last huge Medici canvas was dry, was to see a terrible loss fall upon Rubens in the death of his amiable wife, Isabella Brant. Happy in his marriage, a fond husband and an affectionate father, proud of his handsome home and of them that made his home the handsomer, Rubens, now on the eve of his fiftieth year, found that home rendered desolate by the absence of his loved comrade: that home, on which he had lavished so much pride and care, lost much of its old delights for him. To the two sons that Isabella Brant left him in precious memory of her — a little girl had died as a child, a winsome child as her portrait shows — Rubens turned in his desolation, and painted them in that famous canvas of *The Painter's Two Sons*, that now adorns the Liechtenstein Collection at Vienna, one of the greatest of his portrait pieces, wholly painted by his own hand and with loving care. The two lads stand side by side, the elder boy, Albrecht, dressed in black and leaning against a pillar, a book in his gloved right hand tucked under his arm, his left arm over the shoulder of his younger brother Nicholas, who, bareheaded, is wholly intent on the flight of his captive goldfinch. The canvas is accounted one of the world's masterpieces in portraiture; and, whether so or not, it is a superb study of boyhood. To the painting of it, Rubens would allow no other hand but his own, pressed though he was, beyond even his rapid and colossal powers, with work to be done. At Dresden is a variant of this portrait. The elder lad's studious habits, marked by the book in his hand, won him the favour of the King of Spain, who gave

him a high appointment at sixteen years of age, soon after the painting of this picture.

The Duke of Buckingham, favourite of the young King Charles the First of England, as he had been of his father, James the First, before him, and lord of his will, was in Paris, arranging for the marriage of the King with the Princess Henrietta Maria of France. Buckingham had tried in vain to tempt Rubens to part with his art-treasures during their early friendship in 1625; but finding the desolate man now indifferent about his home and his possessions, he easily prevailed upon him to part with that superb collection in 1627, when it went to England. Rubens plunged himself into high politics. Two years later he was in Spain on a diplomatic mission to the Court of Philip the Fourth from the Infanta Isabella, now become the widow of the Governor of the Spanish Netherlands, the Archduke Albrecht; and there he first met a young Spanish artist of twenty-nine, destined to become world-famous as Velazquez. Indeed, it was due to the admiration and advice of the great Flemish painter that the untravelled Velazquez made his three years' journey into Italy — fortunately without damage to his art.

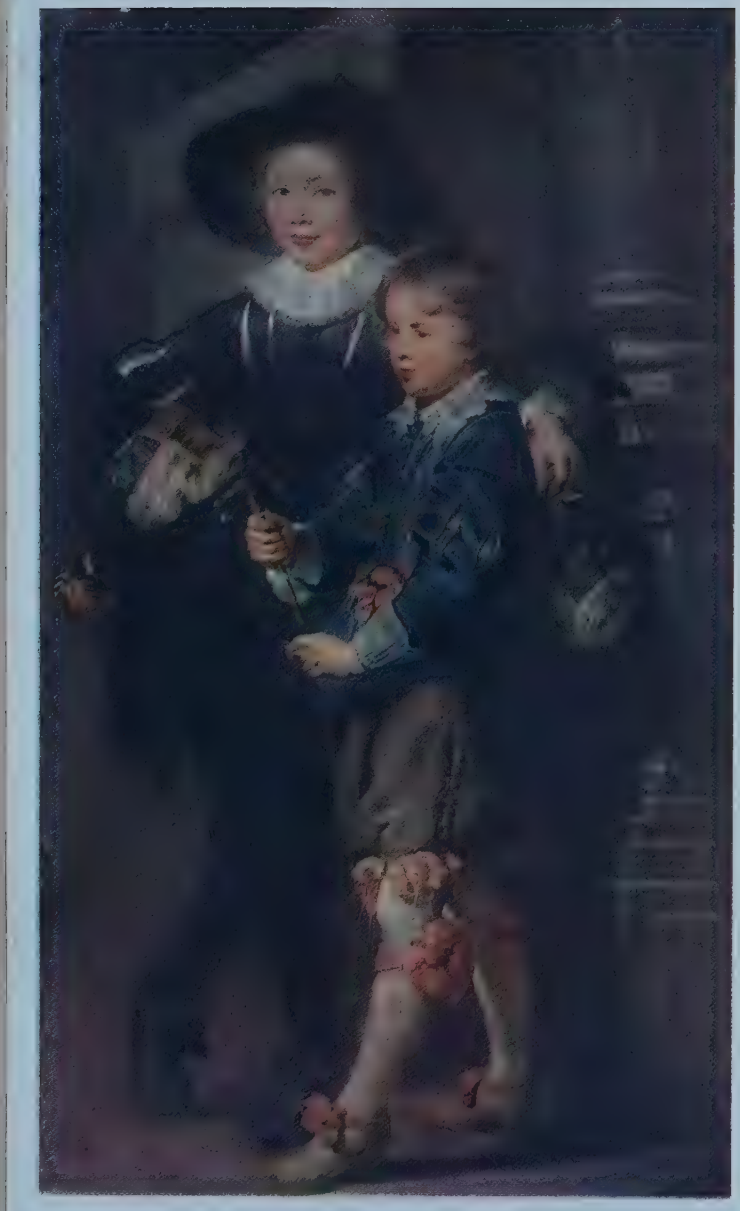
On the 23rd of the August of 1628, Buckingham was assassinated; and the murder entangled high politics and brought confusion on such plans of mice and men as Rubens had been sent to Madrid to guide, his mission being rendered futile thereby. But Buckingham's bitter enemy Olivarez, whom we shall see a little later walking these pages, himself now proposed the peace between Spain and England that he had looked upon with scowling eves heretofore, chiefly because Buckingham had desired it

— in such deeps are state-craft and the welfare of peoples rooted! Rubens, who was engaged upon the painting of the great equestrian portrait of the hot-blooded and wrathful man, that man of straw disguised under an outer semblance of forcefulness, with the commanding eye that knew not how to command, that bull-necked head that knew only the braggart wilfulness of the bully — Rubens was eagerly charged by this favourite of the Spanish King with the new diplomacies.

So, in the May of 1629, Rubens, having worked Netherlandwards to cast off suspicion, set sail from Dunkirk for Greenwich, charged with his secret Spanish mission to Charles the First of England, to conclude peace between Spain and England.

Rubens came to one of the most artistic Courts of Europe. He found himself eagerly welcomed by the English King, proud to have the world-famous "prince of painters" at his Court. During his stay in England he was the personal guest of Charles. Among other work done for the King was the great ceiling for the Banqueting Room at Whitehall — the allegorical designs of the *Apotheosis of James the First* in the side panels of which are the two long decorative schemes abounding in children — a very riot of infants — for which Rubens himself painted the sketches, from which his pupils and fellow-workers, under his guidance, made the large paintings, which to-day look down upon us from the ceiling at Whitehall, all more or less worked upon by Rubens himself — mostly less.

Knighted by the King on the 3rd of March in 1630, Rubens henceforth handsomely strutted it as Sir Peter Paul Rubens; and surely no man ever wore knighthood in more handsome fashion.



The Spanish King, Philip the Fourth, promptly raised him to the nobility of Spain — and would have made him his ambassador to the Court of England, but for the insolent opposition of Count Onate on the ground that "a man who is to represent the King of Spain ought not to live by the work of his own hands," whereby Spain lost a noble diplomatist and a single-minded guardian of her interests at a time that she had sore need of such. The flatulent fatuity indeed was the windbag on which the snobbery of her lords was building an empty splendour that was bringing the ancient might of Spain in ruins about the ears of the pale-faced flaccid Philip — he who was only known to laugh thrice, so fearful was he of the dignity of kings.

Sir Peter Paul Rubens returned to Antwerp; and at Antwerp he did his royal master of England the great artistic service of advising him to the purchase of the famous Raphael Cartoons.

On the 6th of the December of this 1630 that saw him knighted, in his fifty-third year, lonely in his desolate home, he married the sixteen-year-old niece of his first wife — Helena Fourment, whose sister Susanne you may see at the National Gallery in Rubens's immortal and sunny portrait known to the world as the famed *Chapeau de Paille*, though of straw the large black Spanish hat is not, but rather of "poil," or felt — probably the true name of the picture.

Helena Fourment, his wife, he painted again and again. The death of the Archduchess Isabella in 1633 lent him the excuse to retire from the harassing life of diplomacy and to give himself up to his home, his wife, and his children. In 1632 his beautiful young wife had given birth to little Clara Joanna; and this little

girl it is who is learning to walk in that great picture by Rubens, wherein her mother is guiding her uncertain wayfaring in the stately garden of Rubens's house, whilst Rubens walks beside them.

In 1633 was born to Helena Fourment her second child, a son, Francis Rubens; in 1635, a daughter, Isabella Helena; in 1637, a boy, Peter Paul Rubens; and in 1641, eight months after the great artist had passed away, a fifth child, Constantia Albertina. You may see the boy Francis at three years of age in the portrait group of *Mother and Child*, at Munich — the little fellow sitting on her lap quite naked except for a velvet cap on his fair head. In the Louvre is another picture much like it, of *Helena Fourment with her First-born Son*, as well as the canvas painted some three years later, where we see the mother clasping to her a delicate-looking boy who sits upon her knee, whilst a little girl stands near by — the child upon Helena Fourment's knee was the fragile little Peter Paul Rubens the younger.

Rubens was happy in his second marriage as in his first.

Ten years later, on the 30th May 1640, in his sixty-third year, the great heart of Peter Paul Rubens ceased its mighty function, and he passed away from his large adventure of life in his house at Antwerp that he had designed and built. Death came to him whilst busying himself upon a canvas, at the desire of the English King, for the decoration of the ceiling of Henrietta Maria's bedchamber at Greenwich Palace. He did not live to see the ill-fated King go to the disastrous follies that brought his head to the block.

Rubens left to his family a large fortune. Amongst other

things, to the eldest son Albrecht he willed his books; to Nicholas his intaglios, gems, and coins. All his works of art were to be sold except his drawings and the picture of his young wife in which she is painted with only a short fur cloak about her — painted in the intimacy of early marriage, and willed to her. The drawings were to go to that one of his sons that should devote himself to painting, or to the daughter who should marry a famous artist. They had to be sold. No son or daughter of his showed the slightest talent for painting or for the marrying of painters. Albrecht, his eldest son, and godson to the Archduke Albrecht, whom we see in the famous portrait of *The Painter's Two Sons*, succeeded his father as Secretary of the Privy Council, and won to distinction as an archæologist; of Nicholas, of whose head there is a charming sketch at Cassel, the lad with the captive goldfinch in the portrait of *The Painter's Two Sons*, little is known except that he died at thirty-seven. Helena Fourment married again, and became Countess of Bergeyk.

Of prodigious industry, Rubens rose at five in the morning, went to mass, and thence to work, being read to as he painted — a moderate liver, whether in eating or drinking, he worked hard until the light failed; his day's toil only broken by a short and simple meal; at the light's departing he got him astride one of his famous Spanish horses. The evening he gave to his friends, to hospitality, and to goodfellowship. To him, as to all men of culture of his day, the three books of the history of Greece, of Rome, and of the Gospels were ever open; and to mythology and the Bible he turned ever for inspiration, haunted always with

the spirit of allegory. That which is a dead affectation to our day was the very breath of the body of the men of Rubens's years. But it was from nature and the life of man that he drew his deepest inspiration.

A statesman, who held in his skilled and discreet hands the welfare of whole peoples and the inner secrets of history, he pursued that welfare with consummate tact and large intention. An artist of the first rank in the achievement of the world; living in the atmosphere of Courts and versed in the conversation and arts of diplomacy; the personal friend of kings; moved whether in his art or other pursuits by an abounding and astounding energy; a faithful friend; a generous rival; an unquenchable ally; a debonair man of the world and of fashion; a devoted husband; an affectionate father; an honourable and upright man — Peter Paul Rubens made of his prodigious toil a lifelong pleasure, of his pleasure an eternal quest. He stands forth from amongst the artists as a prince of painters. From his plumed hat to his beribboned shoes, from his elaborately laced collar to his as elaborately belaced and baggy breeches, handsomely cloaked and richly arrayed, he stands for splendour in art and the robust joy in and love of life. His eyes loved to look upon a woman as a fleshly thing, her golden or red hair strung with pearls, and a pearl bracelet upon the luminous flesh of her white arm — and the less of all else the better. He was content with the work of the Creator, untrammelled by man's apologies for such works. His blood took fire at the shout and clangor of the hunt, at the roar and rage of battle — war was at his doors all his days; not a thing aloof as now. Re-

finement and grace were not his art-gods; yet are his most robust visions infused with a sense of something imperiously compelling the homage of refinement, without bowing his neck to the graces — something imperial and regal there is, past all defining. And what his mind's eyes saw with such glowing forthright vision, his vigorous hand's skill set down in rich and sumptuous fashion. What grossness was in him was of the animal healthiness of the man; and nothing vile was in it. He was a very Fleming; nor could all the temptation of the great dead of Italy who beckoned to him from the grave draw him from his native vision nor from his native achievement. To his large scheming and masterly will came early a facile vigour of utterance. "I am not a prince; but a man who lives by the labour of his own hands," wrote Rubens; but Carleton's courtly reply that he could not agree with him, and kissed his hand as the "Prince of Painters," was not without significance. There was no great school of painters of the Europe of his after-years that did not owe tribute to him. And of all he did, it were impossible to withdraw his achievement in the painting of children without loss to his wide accomplishment.

His pupils and fellow-workers make the most brilliant group of artists that ever wrought in any man's studio — the mightiest of them, Van Dyck.

CHAPTER FIVE

WHEREIN WE SEE THE FLEMISH ART MAKE ITS HOME IN BLACKFRIARS

WHATSOEVER of refinement Rubens lacked was to come to his pupil ANTHONY VAN DYCK in full measure, who caught something of the grandeur of his master's style and wedded thereto a stately and patrician design all his own, though denied the imagination and creative force and intensity.

Anthony Van Dyck was the seventh son of a family of twelve born to a rich merchant of this art-creating city of Antwerp, over which the Spaniard had cast the blight of his black religious and political venom so that her lately busy streets were grown green with grass. He was born on the 22nd of March in that year of 1599 that in Spain gave birth to one Diego Rodriguez de Silva, who was to reach to the highest achievement in art, and to become world-renowned as Velazquez. And both men were to paint children as the world had never before seen them painted.

In his tenth year the boy Anthony was 'prenticed to the artist Hendrick van Balen (1609)—folk went as mere children to their

great careers in the Sixteen-hundreds — and six years afterwards stepped, a stripling of sixteen, into the studio of Peter Paul Rubens, then thirty-eight and in the full flush of his great career, with his beautiful wife Isabella Brant already six years mistress of his household.

With Rubens the young fellow worked for five years, until the age of twenty-one, when his art so rivalled that of his great master that it is difficult to tell his portraits from those painted by Rubens. But already there is that sense of grace in the drawing of the hands, the poise of the figure, and the dignity of bearing that take the place of the bold lack of restraint to be found in the more forthright pulsing art of his master. Yet the world-renowned portrait of *Cornelius van der Geest*, at the National Gallery, painted by Van Dyck at twenty, was long mistaken for the work of Rubens. It is indeed an astounding achievement for a young fellow scarce twenty.

In his twenty-first year, Van Dyck left the studio of Rubens to go to England (1620) to work for the King; but James the First setting his great gifts to the task of copying pictures by Van Somers, the ruffled Anthony returned to Antwerp in deep disgust, giving his bond to go back again soon: it took him twelve years to redeem that bond. Making for Italy in the October of 1621, at the advice of Rubens, whose favourite pupil he was, he wandered about that country for seven years, studying the great dead Italians — above all, Titian; and, settling awhile at Genoa, produced some of his noblest masterpieces. The *Marquis Giovanni Battista Cattaneo* at the National Gallery is of this period. Of this Italian period, or, as it is

called, his Genoese phase, is the superb portrait of *The Balbi Children*, lent by Lord Lucas to the National Gallery, in which we see the manly little princely folk treated with all that sense of breeding and dignity of bearing so characteristic of the art of Van Dyck — the colour-scheme rich and glowing with all its dark deep reds and browns; the character of each of the three children stated in unforgettable fashion.

In Italy the young Van Dyck roused the ill-will of the Flemish colony of artists, given to the affectation of a crude boorish bohemianism and brawls and drinkings in taverns, by his refined ways, his love of handsome dress, his fastidious habits, and the elaborate state and considerable retinue that he kept. But everywhere he won the hearts of the great and powerful whom he painted, by his charming manner and his sweetness of disposition.

It was not until 1628, on the edge of his thirtieth year, that Van Dyck turned his steps homewards towards Antwerp. Three years after his master Rubens had first set foot on English soil, Van Dyck in the spring of 1632, in his thirty-third year, returned to England, at the urgent request of the young King Charles the First, who in May provided for him a residence in Blackfriars, making him "Princepalle Paynter" in Ordinary to their Majesties, and on the 5th of July knighted him as Sir Anthony Van Dyck.

Van Dyck was soon at work upon that great series of masterpieces of his "English period," marked by increase of range in colour, distinction, and grace, which have made immortal, and have been chiefly responsible for, the courtly and splendid tradition of the manners of the days of King Charles — setting on

the canvas once and for all time the aristocratic air that we associate with the name of Cavaliers — they who with large plumed hat, laced collar and cuffs, slashed silken or satin doublet and knee breeches, with handsome cloak flung over shoulder, and gloved graceful fingers on the hilt of the long sword that hangs on hip, will go down to the ages, fragrant with the romance that Van Dyck conjured and created and wove about them. Van Dyck now lived in great state at Blackfriars, much sought after, spending the summer-time at his fine house at Eltham in Kent, moving with a large retinue worthy of a prince, and keeping open house.

In this his very first summer, with the honour of knighthood fresh upon him, he gave to the world that superb group of *King Charles the First with his Queen Henrietta Maria*, known as "*The Great Piece*" at Windsor. Three years afterwards he painted the *Three Children of Charles the First with Two Spaniels*, at Windsor, and the *Three Children of Charles the First with a Collie Dog*, at Turin — the year of his masterpiece of *King Charles the First*, now one of the most precious treasures of the Louvre, sold by Cromwell after the death of the King. The following year he painted the superb and sumptuous *Equestrian Portrait of King Charles the First* astride a dun-coloured horse, attended by Sir Thomas Morton, bearing his helmet; it is now at the National Gallery, though it was also sold by Cromwell, but eventually returned to the nation through descent from the great Duke of Marlborough.

The *Five Children of Charles the First*, at Windsor, was of the year 1637, Van Dyck being then thirty-eight, as the date to

its signature fully proves; and of which the large "detail" of it, now at the National Portrait Gallery (a copy made probably by a pupil of the great painter) shows from left to right: First, the Princess Mary in her sixth year, afterwards Princess of Orange and mother of William the Third of England, who, marrying James the Second's daughter Mary, this Mary's niece and god-child, was to overthrow the small James (who stands here beside her in petticoats) from his great heritage of England — in this girl Mary's hands, then, was the destiny of England; secondly, the Prince James, Duke of York, in his fourth year, afterwards King James the Second, whom Mary's son and his own daughter Mary usurped and sent packing into exile at St. Germain, hard by Paris — he might here, in his innocent childhood, be mistaken for a girl in his close-fitting lace cap and long petticoats; thirdly, Charles, Prince of Wales, aged seven, future King of England as Charles the Second, who was to lead a pretty life of it as the Merry Monarch and bring the nation near to the war that his father did soon after this picture was painted, though he looks a handsome gentle boy enough here, with his slender fingers spread out over the great dog's head; fourthly, the Princess Elizabeth, in her second year, who was to die a young woman and a maid at Carisbrooke — she who holds with motherly anxiety upon her uneasy seat the fat year-old babe, who is, fifthly, the Princess Anne who died in infancy.

The pretty child *Prince James*, Duke of York and afterwards King of England as James the Second for a short uneasy tactless reign of four short years, Van Dyck also limned in a portrait at Turin, which is a masterpiece — that portrait in which the child

holds an apple in his small hands. What a difference between these years when the little fellow, like the four children with whom he stands in the Windsor portrait, was a happy innocent little one, living in the splendour of his father's Court, before that war that rent England in twain, and sent this little fellow with his brother and sisters into exile, to return in the years to come and rule in about as mad fashion as it was ever given even to his romantic house to bemuddle its mighty heritage! It is almost as fantastic as it is strange that the demure little Mary and the child James, standing beside her, were to mother and father the only Stuarts who saw their people triumphant on land and sea against their enemies. And the elder boy Charles! Who could foretell in that manly little fellow the cynical good-for-nothing who would sell his land to France for gold rather than trust his people?

Van Dyck painted these children of the King again and again; and as one gazes upon them there comes to us that haunting sense of the charm of the Stuarts that their many follies and blunders seem unable to cast out of our affection; his brush caught the glamour of their royal house and fixed it upon his rare canvases.

It is told how the King, sitting for his portrait to Van Dyck, talking to the Earl of Arundel of the miserable state into which the royal purse had fallen, suddenly turned to the painter and asked him playfully, alluding to the good table he kept and the extravagance of his style of living, whether he, too, knew what it meant to be short of money; to which Van Dyck replied: "Yes, sire — when one keeps an open table for one's friends and

an open purse for one's mistresses, one soon reaches the bottom of one's money-chest." The King, to put an end to Van Dyck's open and unrestrained affairs with women, looked about for a good marriage for him; and it was at Charles's urging that Van Dyck married one of the Queen's maids of honour, of good family though without fortune — the beautiful Mary Ruthven, daughter of Patrick Ruthven, the son of the unfortunate Earl of Gowrie.

Van Dyck married, in 1639, the pretty creature whom he immortalised in that beautiful portrait where she sits playing the large viol. Mary Ruthven bore him a daughter.

Rubens had died in the year following Van Dyck's marriage, 1640; Van Dyck soon thereafter went to Antwerp — thence to Paris, expecting important work at the French Court; but was back again in London the next year, where, except for a short journey or so, he settled for the rest of his life, unfortunately nearing its end. The King's affairs were now getting into a desperate state; he was going towards the abyss which his dreamy eyes had not the vision to see yawning before his feet, towards that mad folly that was to end in disaster to his crown and in death upon the scaffold, though Van Dyck was to know no hint of it. The artist was deeply humiliated at not getting the command for the painting of four panels of the *History of the Order of the Garter* for the walls of the Banqueting House at Whitehall, of which the ceiling had been painted by Rubens; the rebuff was preying upon his mind when Death stalked across his threshold and took him on the 9th of the December of 1641, a year after Rubens had laid down his brush for ever.

They bore his mortal remains to Old St. Paul's, and buried him in the old Cathedral; but the great Fire of London, that blotted out a large part of the city (when the boy Charles of the Windsor portrait was grown up to man's estate and was King over the land), took the old Cathedral in its furnace breath and mingled the ashes of Van Dyck with the ruins of its ancient state.

His beautiful widow married a baronet, Sir Richard Pryse, of Gogerddan.

It has been said that Van Dyck was fortunate in his sitters; the truth is that his sitters were the rather fortunate in Van Dyck. He painted always the great; and he painted them ever with an eye upon the sumptuous palaces that the splendid work of his hands was intended to adorn and glorify. The most dignified painter of men that the world has seen, his art was superbly fitted to the age; he gave to his very children the courtly bearing and the air of princes. Nowhere is this more marked than in the charming portrait at Amsterdam, of *William of Orange* (*William II.*) *and Princess Mary of England*, as affianced children, wherein the handsome lad and girl stand hand in hand with all the air of crowned king and queen, — William of Orange, to be husband of this Mary of the Windsor picture — father and mother therefore of that William the Third who was to pluck James the Second from his throne.

The handsome cavalier seen in Van Dyck's *William the Second of Orange*, who holds the princess's hand, is in marked contrast with his sad and pensive son *William the Third*, aged seven, as painted by CORNELIS JANSSEN VAN CEULEN THE YOUNGER, in

the National Portrait Gallery. Here the young prince, in yellow coat, looks more like a princess; and his sickly youth is pronounced rather than that fire that burnt so fiercely in his feeble body and led him to such wide enterprise as conqueror and king.

Born in 1593 in London town was the Flemish CORNELIS JANSSEN VAN CEULEN. He was painting at the Court of James the First from his twenty-fifth year, in 1618 — the year of his *John Milton at the Age of Ten*. His is a somewhat perplexing personality, as he usually called himself Johnson or Jonson of London. When Van Dyck came to London in 1632, Van Ceulen, then living at Blackfriars, seems to have become his friend; and Van Dyck painted his portrait. However, Van Dyck's achievement was soon looming so large that the elder man's fame sank, and he had to retire to a Kentish village. But the storm of the great Civil War of Cavalier and Roundhead was gathering; and, bursting over the land, sent the Court-artist a-packing. "Johnson of London" became Cornelis Janssen van Ceulen again; and got him over to Holland, where he lived the remainder of his days until his death in 1664, four years after Charles the Second came back to rule over England, when Cornelis Janssen van Ceulen the Younger took up his father's mantle.

Amongst the many lesser Flemish men who either assisted Rubens or was strongly influenced by him, was P. DE VOS, born in 1593, the same year as Cornelis Janssen van Ceulen the elder — six years, that is to say, before Van Dyck. De Vos outlived most of the great painters of his day, dying in 1676. The delightful portrait by him of his two children, *Daughters of the Painter*, shows him developing towards that delightful frank

acceptance of childhood without pretence and without pose that the Flemish men — even the greatest of them — could not wholly rid from their art. The fellowship with childhood was to come to the Dutchmen, from whom it was to be passed to their English kin — kin in blood and kin in artistic vision. De Vos's two girl-children are wholly delightful and comely little minxes; there is pure childhood in the mischievous way they are playing at being watched, dressed all in their best. Here we get the modern note, despite the fantastic stiffness of their elaborate gowns; and over all is a vivid realism more in tune with the Dutch than the Flemish genius.

CHAPTER SIX

WHEREIN IS DISCOVERED A WORLD-GENIUS STEPPING OUT OF A POLICE-COURT SCANDAL

WE have seen the Seven Northern Provinces declare their independence in 1581, and proclaiming William the Silent, Prince of Orange, their Sovereign — his foul assassination three years afterwards in the July of 1584 — and his son Maurice elected in his stead.

Maurice governed over the Dutch until his death in 1625 — a period during which the wealth of Holland vastly increased, and a group of artists was born who were to make the land famous; a group that includes such masters as Jan van Goyen, Ruysdael, Rembrandt, the two Ostades, Terborch, Albert Cuyp, and Paul Potter.

The brother of Maurice, Frederick Henry, succeeded him as Stadtholder, from 1625 to 1647, years during which the republic came to still wider prosperity and wealth, and the Dutch Art blossomed over the land. The January of 1640 saw the beginnings of the diplomacies that freed the whole of the Low Countries, created the liberty of the United Provinces, and made an end for ever to all Spanish rule in the Netherlands.

The wave of puritanism that had swept over the Netherlands — as fanatical as was the fanaticism of the persecuting Spaniard: indeed fanaticism ever creates a hate that grows to equal fanaticism of enmity — this wave of puritanism had reached its supreme madness in the acts of the Calvinistic iconoclasts in 1566, when many of the religious pictures of the early Dutch school were wantonly destroyed, whilst others were only saved by covering them with a coat of black, and painting thereon the Ten Commandments. Thus were the childish spites and anger of men fantastically appeased by putting into mourning the Commandments that they set upon the altars of their faith. Now the Dutch had soon shaken off all allegiance to Rome — and, of a truth, Rome had treated them in rough fashion enough — by consequence, there being no demand for religious pictures any longer, the artists turned to painting homely subjects, to the delineation of the every-day life of the people, to the decoration of the town-halls (that stood for the centre of civic strength and the stronghold against tyranny) with large civic groups of prominent citizens knit together by the guild-fellowship, and to portraits for the houses of the well-to-do.

Born at Delft in 1567 was MIEREVELT, who became famous and rich as a portrait-painter; and Mierevelt of Delft, Court-painter to the House of Orange at The Hague, had among his pupils one PAULUS MOREELSE, born in 1571, whose work so closely resembled that of his master that his portraits are often mistaken for the work by that master's hand. Of the true work of Moreelse's vision is the dainty little lady with the high white ruffle, who sits fondling her dog as *The Little Princess*

at Amsterdam. Moreelse died a couple of years before the death of Rubens. The stiff atmosphere of Courts still held Dutch art; and the child plays at being a woman; the artist is chiefly concerned in making her appear as like a woman and as little like a child as nature will let him.

But a mightier art than any that Mierevelt of Delft or Moreelse knew was about to come out of Holland, though it was to be created by the hand of another pupil, who, like Moreelse, had worked in Mierevelt's workshop — one who was to lift the achievement of Dutch art to the heights to which Rubens was lifting the Flemish across the Rhine, and to surpass even the prince of painters in dexterity of craftsmanship, in skill of hand, in truth of vision, and in forthright utterance of the wizardry of his brush; for, if ever there were eyes that saw the truth without bias, they were the eyes of Dutch FRANS HALS.

Born at Antwerp about 1580 or 1584 (at the dawn of Dutch liberty, when the Seven Northern Provinces that bred him were shouting their hoarse cry of exultation in independence and setting William the Silent to rule over them), yet though born at Antwerp, Frans Hals was the son of Haarlem folk — indeed the father of Frans was a magistrate of Haarlem, though at the time of the child's birth resident in the Flemish city. Frans Hals was three or four years younger than Rubens. By twenty, Frans Hals himself was settled at Haarlem, the Dutch home of his forefathers, becoming apprentice to the artist Karel van Mander. But little is known of his early life, save that it has a riotous beginning in the mouths of gossips. Frans Hals was no saint, and

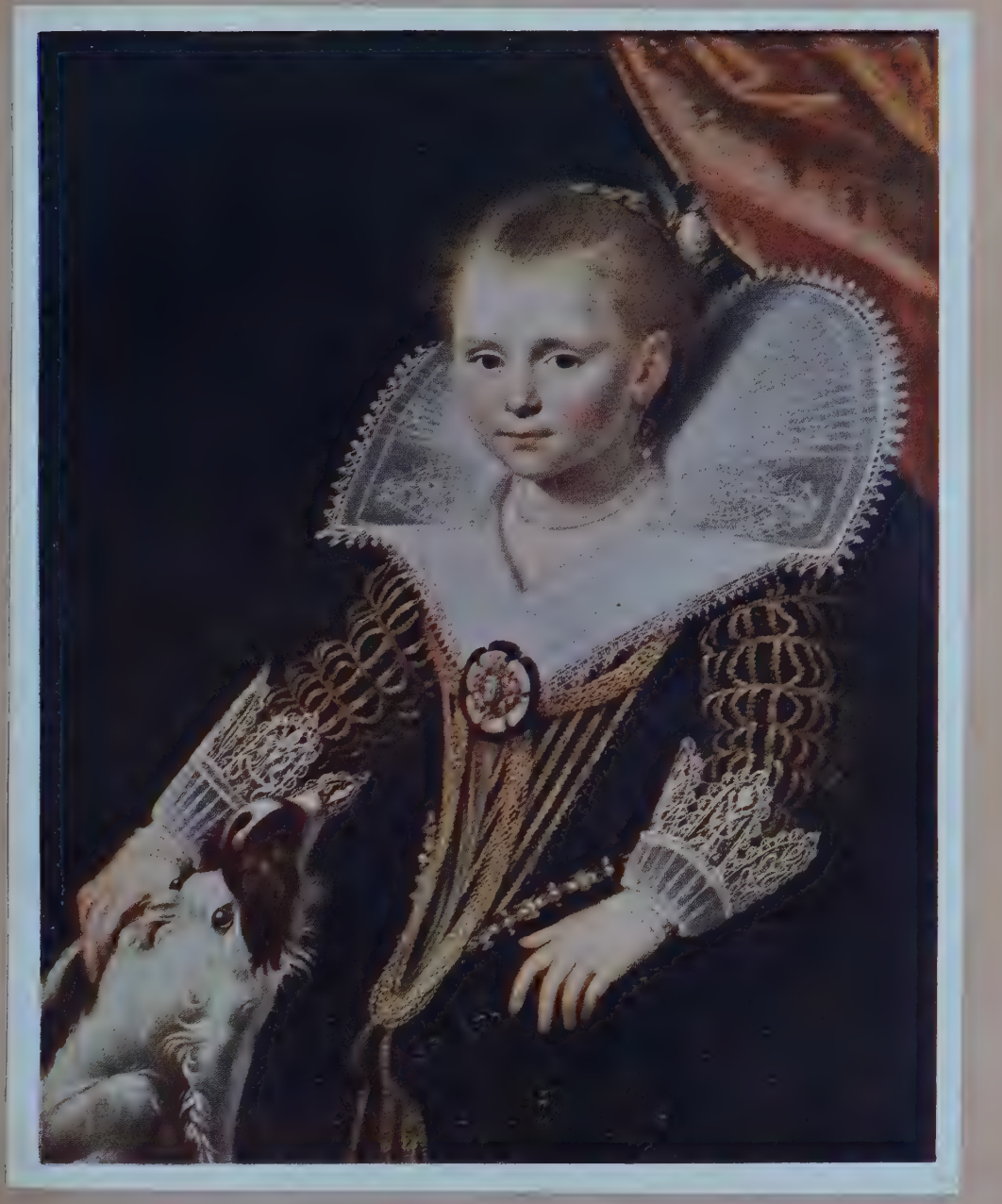
the tavern knew him well. His earliest appearance in the records of his town proves him the father to a son at thirty-five; the next is not a pretty one — he was summoned in 1615, being then thirty-five, for ill-treating his wife, Anneke Hiermansz, who died a few months afterwards; nor does her short married career of four or five years read like a happy one, since Hals only got off the consequences of the charge with a severe reprimand from his judges on condition of shunning drunken company and reforming his manner of life. Anneke was scarce a year in her grave before Frans Hals married Lysbeth Reyniers; and none too soon, for to her was born, within nine days after, a daughter Sara. This second marriage was as happy as the first was unhappy; the verdict on Frans Hals therefore depends not a little on the temper of poor unhappy Anneke — and, as to whether she were a nag and a scold, the deponent sayeth not. The justices at least cast the blame upon Frans Hals; and they ought to have known. There is no hint that it was a case of "first give him a fair trial, and then hang him." Nor yet is there proof that it was not. Justice in Holland was wearing a long face and black steeple hat in those days.

Hals was now thirty-six, and his repute as painter must have been higher than his credit as husband or good citizen, for he painted the famous *Banquet of the Officers of the St. Joris Doele*, or *Arquebusiers of St. George*. These great banqueting groups and Syndic pieces, and his canvases of a man and wife in a garden, are amongst the masterpieces of the age. But it was in his single portraits, above all in his "head and shoulders" pieces, he displayed a sheer mastery of painting never approached by

mortal hands. It is a loss to art that Hals rarely painted children and never the nude. But when he did paint a child, whether in his family groups or in his far too rare portraits of children, he showed that searching vision in the depicting of childhood, rid of all affectation or pose, which even the stiff dress of the period could not overwhelm. The famous picture of a *Nurse and Child*, now at Berlin, in spite of the restorations of the cleaner, reveals him in all his strength in the statement of childhood, his art wedded to a rare feeling for decorative balance displayed in the consummate manner in which he has employed the golden ornamentation of the child's full gown and the belaced linen of the elaborate ruffle and bib and cuffs to create pattern, without calling away the attention from the heads. For, here the childhood of the child dominates all. It is indeed very child!

In the large *Family Group* at the National Gallery, his skill of treatment in the moods and movements and acts of children, again, is seen in all its living force of truth, whether babe or boy or little girl—distinguishing his art as much as does the skill of arrangement so carefully disguised under the casual effect as of the group having gathered together and been painted as at a glance of the eye.

As the years ran out, the mastery of Frans Hals but increased, so that he soon left behind him even the fine artistry of these two master works of his second period, reaching to achievement of such wondrous magic of the brush as was to thrust him into the very highest rank amongst all painters. In subtlety and beauty of colour he never rivalled Velazquez; in richness of colour never Rubens or the great Venetians; but in consummate



handling of the paint and in directness and force he surpassed them all. It is not easy to reconcile such dexterity — and in the hand of an ageing man — with the drunken record that gossip has written about his name. He lived in a land of black puritanism — of as black a puritanism of Protestantism as the puritanism of Catholicism of Spain was black; and 't is like enough that his black sins, and the riots that raised godly eyes in shocked solemnity to heaven, were but too often a mere "whistling on the Sabbath."

No man who painted had more exquisite sense of touch, more forthright manner of stating character, for all his quick ways, than Frans Hals; nor was he content to display this sense of character merely in the painting of heads — you shall find it in every hand, ay, in the very gloves that the hands have worn into their character. Whether the hand of a child or a man or a woman — a dandified hand or a toil-worn hand — Hals stated its character with all the skill that makes his portraits live. His high example is to-day a beacon-light to the finest artistic careers. His lusty joyous attitude to life gave to his hand's cunning a like vivid lustiness of style.

The neglect which fell upon this, one of the supreme masters of all time, for more than a couple of hundred years must ever remain a part of the puzzle of the vulgarity that afflicts academic minds — so much so that quite recently it was deemed critical wisdom to pour forth the drivel, in "excuse" for the exquisite subtlety of the grey harmonies of his third and greatest period, that he was so poor he could not buy colours!

Nor did this neglect and ignorance of the greatness of the

man's art even tarry until his death; it came out in all its frank and complacent vulgarity, and fell upon Hals before his years were run out. Of his spendthrift habits there can be no doubt; in 1652, in his seventy-second year, the baker Ykess levied upon him a distraint for rent. That distress warrant makes painful reading. In the inventory of Hals's home, that you may see to this day at Haarlem, you will find that the old man's possessions then consisted of three mattresses and bolsters, with bedding — an armoire — an oak table — and five pictures. A bare home indeed! And it is a grim comment on human greatness, that the wholly forgotten dullards who walked with pompous self-satisfaction in their parochial position, allowed this man of genius, whom they probably looked upon as of little account, ten years later to apply for and to get relief like a beggar of the streets from the municipality — he who makes Haarlem a place of pilgrimage to-day, in whom Haarlem has its chief glory, whilst they are gone to dust and to the neglect that they would have put upon him. He had to beg help from the Town Council; and two years later the old man of eighty-four had to repeat his begging for alms, getting a yearly dole of two hundred Carolus guilders and three loads of peat to keep his old body warm from the blasts of winter — for there was now no fire on the hearth of the bare home of Frans Hals! Yet to their eternal credit be it said, they put out the helping hand in a form more consonant with the dignity of the mighty painter; he was given an order to paint two more large groups, before he died; and with all the wondrous art that his wizardry could create, he painted in the fulness of his years his last great masterpieces: the *Six Gov-*

ernors of the Old Men's Hospital and the *Five Lady Governors of the Old Women's Hospital.* Even here, in his eighty-fourth year, the laughing, blithe-hearted Hals shows still the merry-twinkling eyes of humour, akin to tears, in his superb character-drawing. He was ever a prince of dramatists among painters; and like the master-playwrights of the age that bore him he paid but scanty heed to scenery.

Frans Hals laid him down and died, an old man of eighty-odd years, on the twenty-ninth of the August of 1666, at Haarlem, the town that had bred his people, and in which he wrought to such splendid purpose. And it is to Haarlem that those must go to-day who would judge the fulness of his high achievement — to that Haarlem that at least gave the old genius warmth in the troubled winter of his days, if in meagre fashion, and out of its charity commissioned the two groups which have brought the donors immortality — they look grim old ladies, and there is a solemn old gentleman or so amongst them, but behind the starched bearing of their bodies as we see them now was warm blood flowing — to that Haarlem that allowed his aged widow to live on for ten years longer upon ten halfpence a week of its meagre charity — Haarlem that, though it guessed so little of the grandeur that should come to the town through him, at least buried him in the choir of the stately old Church of St. Bavon, if without monument over his grave.

CHAPTER SEVEN

WHEREIN SHALLOW RESPECTABILITY BROWBEATS A GIANT—NOT WITHOUT WIDE APPROVAL

FRANS HALS was twenty-six, Rubens twenty-eight, Van Dyck a child of seven, when there was born to a miller of Leyden, on the fifteenth day of July in 1606, a boy-child whom the world was to know as REMBRANDT HARMENSZ VAN RYN—"of the Rhine"—or better still as REMBRANDT. The miller would appear to have been well-to-do and ambitious, since the lad Rembrandt was sent at fourteen to study law at Leyden University. Thence he entered the studio of the mediocre Jacob van Swanenburgh for three years, whence he went for a while to, and worked under, that other popular mediocrity Pieter Lastman of Amsterdam, whose Italianisms roused the rebel spirit of this young fellow, destined to reach to the topmost summits of his art.

Yet the fates were kind in sending Rembrandt van Ryn to mediocrities for his training in the tricks and mysteries and practice of his trade; it was well that he, of all men, should come to his art untrammelled by the thinking of other powerful wills.

Living a simple life, his day was devoted to the achievement of the works of his mighty genius. His meal of a herring or bread and cheese was feast enough for one so rich in imagination.

In 1629, being twenty-three, Rembrandt left Leyden for Amsterdam, whereat he settled for life; which city, as has been said in the splendid phrase, he was to "make famous." Here he at once came to the front as a portrait-painter. The stilted fashion in portraiture set by Moreelse and being practised by Rembrandt's rival De Keyser, which compelled the artist to accept the vogue to a considerable degree in spite of his own distaste for it, he was soon able to set aside; for his marriage with the wealthy advocate's daughter, Saskia van Uylenborch, in the June of 1634, he being twenty-eight, freed his hands to work out his brain's skill and to give utterance to his glowing imagination, thus leading to the real beginning of his great career. He was thenceforth the vogue. This happy marriage, that brought out all the love of the great painter, and filled his life, was fruitful in great works. His admiration for Saskia resulted in many superb canvases. Up to the time of his marriage, his twenty-eighth year, was his first period, marked by detailed finish — his so-called phase of greenish-grey flesh-tones.

It was a tragic act of the fates that allowed the master but eight short years of this splendour of life; Saskia was taken in 1642, in Rembrandt's thirty-sixth year. The gifts that the gods had given to Rembrandt may be judged by the astonishing mastery shown in his famous portrait of the *Old Lady* in the white ruff and cap that is one of the most precious treasures of the National Gallery, painted at twenty-eight, in the months

shortly after his marriage. Here is character painted with supreme skill. Rembrandt so developed his art from this time that, whilst it created most realistically the outer surface of the object limned, he was enabled by its strange and haunting mysteries in the play of light and shadow, to suggest in compelling fashion the mysterious and intangible essence and inner significance of the human soul and mood.

But destiny had in store for the gentle Rembrandt, even in these happy days of his love for Saskia, one stunning buffet after another, which struck the man down in sorrow. The loss of his two girl-children and of his little son, and the death of his beloved mother in 1640, seemed to be the very filling up of his cup of bitterness; but the year of his painting the immortal *Night Watch* saw Saskia also taken from him.

With her death in 1642 ended Rembrandt's second manner of painting; and he entered upon his third or greatest phase.

Saskia's death fell like a blight upon Rembrandt's heart; for a while gloom overshadowed his artistry. But he plunged himself into work; and slowly, amidst his stupendous labour, the strength of the man prevailed. He now employed an ever-increasing chiaroscuro; his sense of mystery enormously gained by consequence.

Saskia had left him the use of her wealth until his death or until he married again, when it was to go to their only surviving son Titus. The man's lavish habits and the loss of Saskia's careful husbandry were disastrous to his fortunes. Seven years after Saskia's death, Hendrickje Stoffels became housekeeper and model for the nude to Rembrandt, and nurse to his small son Titus. Rembrandt's relations with Hendrickje were soon not to the

liking of the busybodies and staid neighbours of Amsterdam; Rembrandt being a self-willed and independent fellow, a chill set in, and clients began to fall away. In these years, at the height of his powers, he frequently painted his small boy Titus; and of this boy, grown to youth, there is a portrait in the Louvre in which Rembrandt reaches to an almost miraculous power in suggesting the movement and breath of life and the stirring of the atmosphere that surrounds him as the lad looms against the mysterious shadows into which he melts, one can scarce discover exactly where or how.

The unfinished *Portrait of a Boy*, in the possession of Lord Spencer at Althorp, is a delightful example of Rembrandt's charm in the painting of children, of his truth of vision, and of his capacity to state all its refinement and delicacy — and the more interesting in that it reveals his method of laying in his work. This boy is very like Titus, though known as the *Prince of Orange*. If William the Third of England as a child, and if, as reputed, painted about 1658 or 1660, the boy would be from eight to ten; and, if an early portrait of him, it brings back the strange fact that Rembrandt's father-in-law, father of Saskia, was dining with William the Silent, the child's forefather, on that night on which he was assassinated, and was indeed within a hair's-breadth of being present as witness of the dastardly act.

And let us not take part with the gossips of Amsterdam, whether in petticoats or breeches of the old garb of the Sixteen-hundreds, in sanctimoniously condemning the pretty Hendrickje Stoffels. She came, a comely girl, into Rembrandt's service; and was soon sitting for some of the masterpieces of the world's

artistic achievement. But she has higher claims on our kindly charity than that. She became the mistress of Rembrandt; but Rembrandt was no loose-living fellow. She became his wife in all but the law. She saw that he had no business faculties whatsoever; she saw the ruin that must come to him from his open-handed generosity to all who asked his aid, and from his reckless use of money. She watched over and guarded the man, and she mothered the child Titus, this illiterate handsome girl, without hint of marriage or personal benefit. And as she mothered and watched over the father and child when fortune smiled and all was sunshine, so she sacrificed herself for them and stood by them and mothered both when the days were black and all else had deserted them. For black days were coming for large-hearted Rembrandt van Ryn.

The last fourteen or fifteen years of Rembrandt's life were all too unfortunately embarrassed by lack of means. The house he had bought had swallowed a large sum; he had filled it with large numbers of valuable works of art and costly art treasures. The country, severely drained of its wealth by the Spanish wars, saw the purses of the once well-to-do less generously opened for works of art, whilst the independence of the artist and his contempt for the narrow lives and canting morality of the day, and his utter indifference to the opinions of those who had the means of buying his works, created a gulf between him and the goodwill of patrons. Disaster threatened from all sides, and difficulties hedged him about. His relations with Hendrickje Stoffels roused wide scandal, and the moralities were grossly shocked; so that, in 1654, Rembrandt's forty-eighth year, Hendrickje was

severely reprimanded by the elders of the Church for her loose conduct. Hendrickje gave birth to a daughter, Cornelia, on the heels of the utterance of the reprimand, and further accentuated the scandal.

But disasters were now pouring in upon Rembrandt. Two years afterwards, in 1656, he was made bankrupt. It was, as a matter of fact, a bad time for artists. The distress in Amsterdam was now so general that 2000 houses are said to have stood tenantless. A year later still, the sale of his treasured belongings for a miserable price brought him to dire distress. The selling of his house over his head saw the mighty genius at fifty-one without a home. Yet, to his undying honour, the misery and want of the remaining twelve years of his life cast no gloom over the spirit of his art, nor cramped the splendour of his imagination, nor marred the supreme beauty of his craftsmanship, nor embittered his genius.

And to Hendrickje's undying honour, be it ever remembered, it was that Rembrandt was enabled to continue his art. She and Titus made a quiet little home for him where Rembrandt and Hendrickje lived as man and wife, and so considered by their neighbours; there she watched over him and the boy, and brought the lad up a manly and honourable fellow, with her little Cornelia. And there she and the affectionate lad handled Rembrandt's money affairs with such skill as to save the remnants from the sharks that would have preyed upon him, and gave him leisure and ease of days for the pursuit of his art, even if in straitened circumstances; and there they lived a happy little family. But Rembrandt had not touched bottom in sorrow. Hendrickje died;

and the loss broke the man. Titus, beloved of Rembrandt, 'prenticed as a painter, also died. Then blindness threatened the broken man. He passed away, forgotten and unnoticed, on the 8th of October 1669.

Rembrandt was an artist of the supreme rank — a very poet. To him was given in portraiture the power to see the inner significance of character; to him were revealed the scars of experience. His sympathy was profound; his tragic intensity no less profound. He brought to his all too rare landscapes a deep sense of the mystery of nature stated with a largeness of vision and a breadth of handling never before dreamed of, never since surpassed; there, as in all he did, is that deep resounding utterance that is haunting and compelling as the orchestration of great music.

Seven years younger than Velazquez and Van Dyck, twenty-nine years younger than Rubens, twenty-six years the junior of Frans Hals, Rembrandt lived in an age of giants; and if Velazquez be the subtlest colourist, Frans Hals the greatest technician yet given to the world in the art of painting, Rembrandt is the mightiest genius of them all in his largeness of conception, in the dramatic sense, in the command of mystery, and in the statement of light and shadow — the supreme poet of painting, with the deepest insight, and producing the most stupendous sense of the music of colour by his appeal to the large gamut of resonances that lie in the deeps of deepest shadows, fathomless as abysses, up to the highest notes of light, which he employed clear and exquisite as the treble of flutes and violins.

And yet, so aggressive is self-complaisant vulgarity posing as

culture (though it seems almost incredible), the nightmare of "respectability" so held the world for centuries that the slime of an ugly repute grew about the name and career and fame of this Rembrandt — and, worse still, slopped over and befouled his mighty art. To Ruskin's eternal shame is recorded in black and white the printed falsity written by no other hand than his: "It was the aim of Rembrandt to paint the foulest things he could see — by rushlight." And the phrase will go down the ages as does the shrill laughter of Herodias, her lips scarlet with shame and her cheeks eternally stretched by the hideous cachinnation she cannot stem.

CHAPTER EIGHT

WHEREIN IT IS SEEN THAT, THE CAPTAINS BEING DEAD, THE CITADEL SLOWLY SURRENDERS

REMBRANDT was but a boy of eleven when there was born to a wealthy man of Zwolle in Overyssel, in 1617, a son whom he christened GERARD TERBORCH (or Ter Borch or Terburg, as you will), to whom, as the lad grew up, his father taught the art of drawing and painting as he himself had picked it up in brilliant amateur fashion during his travels through Italy. At sixteen the youthful Terborch was at Amsterdam, but early left for Haarlem, to become pupil to Pieter Molyn the elder; but he had soon turned from the teachings of lesser men, steeping himself in admiration for the rollicking Frans Hals. At eighteen he was journeying again — to England, thence to Germany, on through Italy (where the art of Titian held him awhile), then back to Holland, where he worked awhile in Amsterdam, subject to Rembrandt. When the ratification of the treaty of peace was signed at Münster, Terborch was in that town, and painted the famous picture of the formality. Thence his thirty-first year saw him trundling southwards in state with the Spanish Plenipotentiary to the Court of Spain, who, though bringing little out of

Holland except what was black comfort to the King, could at least carry to the dejected Spanish Court one of the most exquisite of living Dutch artists. And Terborch was to complete his "education" (surely the very happiest granted to any painter!) by seeing Velazquez at work. Thus Terborch returned to Holland at thirty-three with the astounding good fortune of having been granted eyes trained by seeing at work three of the greatest painters of all time. He settled down, as a married citizen, at Deventer, where he created during the remainder of his peaceful life the exquisite series of statements of the manners of his race that record in consummate fashion the social life of his Dutch day, and of portraits on a small scale, in which all his exquisite gifts and vigorous artistry found their fullest scope until his death on the 8th of November 1681, in his sixty-fourth year.

If his superbly rendered portrait of the little *Helene van der Schalke*, at Amsterdam, be not the portrayal of a beautiful child, the beauty of the painting of the elfish antique little body in the white dress and apron, with basket hung over arm, playing the part of a good Dutch housewife, raises it to the rank of one of the immortal things wrought by the skill of man's hands, whether for subtlety of colour, brilliance of lighting, breadth of handling, or largeness of vision. Terborch, had he painted no other work but this, had proved himself what he was, the most exquisite and powerful of the so-called "Conversation painters" of Holland; and as a colourist the greatest of all the rather stupidly styled "Little Masters" of his age.

Amongst the many pupils of Rembrandt was one NICOLAES MAES, or, as some spell it, MAAS (since your Dutch "ae" is

broad "a" as in father). Maes, born at Dort in 1632, was therefore eighteen when he was bound 'prentice to Rembrandt in 1650, with whom he learnt the craft of his art for four years, until, at twenty-two, he got him back to his native Dort, to practise his skill thereat for some twenty-four years, except for a short stay at Antwerp — a sojourn, however, that was to have a profound effect upon his art; for the influence of Rubens and Van Dyck breathed into that art a Flemish grace and sense of elegance that were to lead him to a marked style which bridges the gap between the great Dutch masters of the Sixteen-hundreds and the French and English achievement of the Seventeen-hundreds. And though one must ever regret his passing from his earlier influence under Rembrandt, with that vivid colour-faculty and forceful style that lift him to the front rank amongst Rembrandt's pupils, he turned to the more superficial style of his later years caught from the survey of the art of Van Dyck, with gifts that prevented his work becoming too much engrossed in merely trivial effects, though the French grace being alien to his race never wholly discovered to him its elegance or its full distinction. To Amsterdam he went in 1678, in his forty-sixth year, his master Rembrandt being in his grave some nine years — whose sublime art was wholly gone out of the fashion. In Amsterdam he thenceforth abode, and wrought in the Flemish-Dutch style that brought him favour, and at Amsterdam he died on the twenty-fourth of November in 1693. Nicolaes Maes won to high honour amongst the pupils of his great master; yet it is odd to think that the art that Rembrandt had released from bondage and loosed to the full gamut of freedom in handling, was to be led back by Maes

of all men to within the narrower boundaries of finish and gracefulness that he caught through the Flemings from Italy; yet he kept the sense of light and shade that Rembrandt had revealed to him, and the vigorous treatment of colour, not without distinction in breadth of handling for all its elegance. For portraiture he enlarged his canvas, and focussed his artistry from a farther distance than in his delicate smaller pieces. Towards the end of his years, it is true, his art took on much of that tendency towards daintiness and grace that is nicknamed "Frenchiness"; but which was in reality an Italianising of the Flemish art, and, in a lesser degree, of Dutch art, that held the seeds of canker even in the master work of Rubens and Van Dyck.

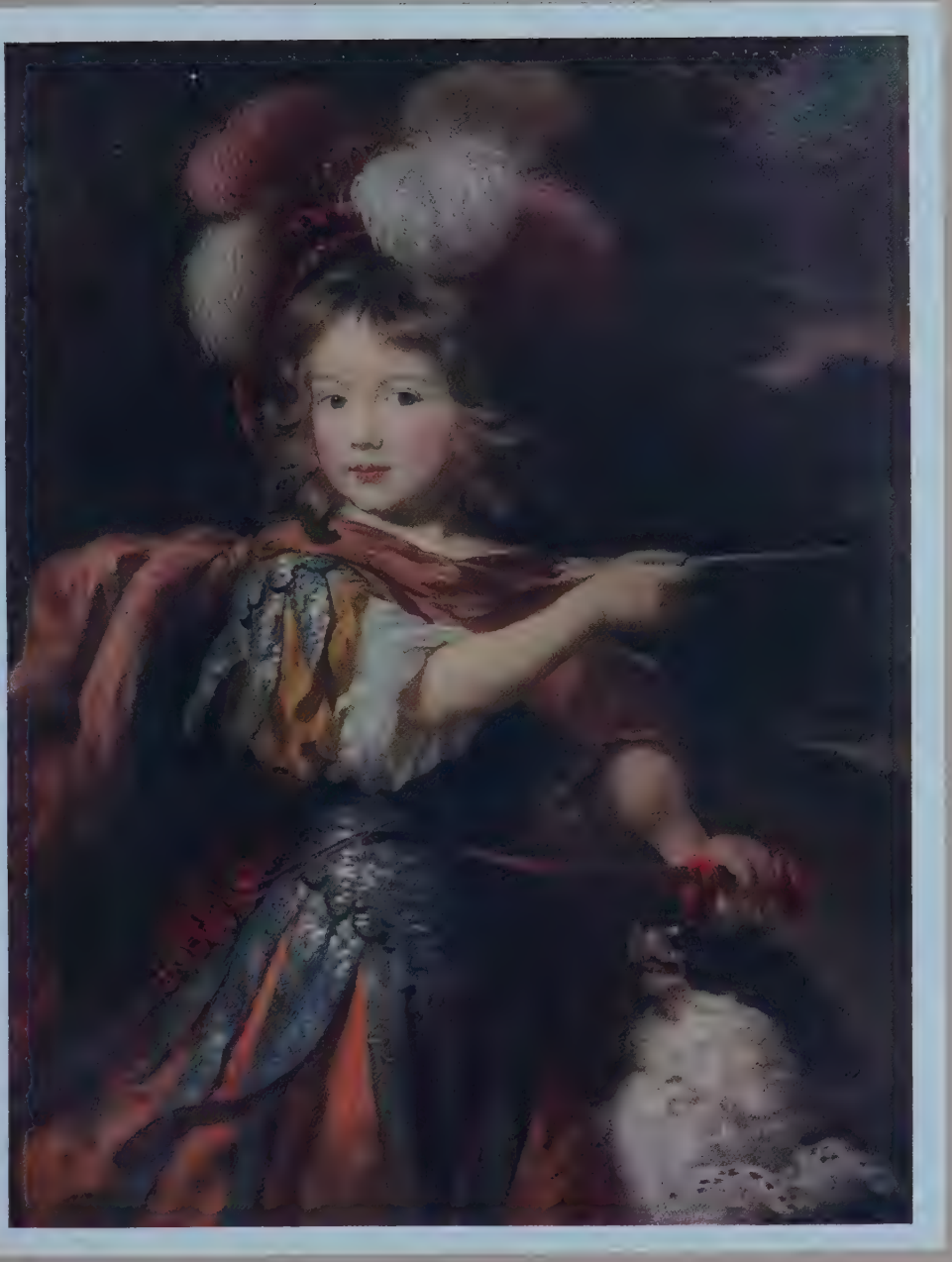
The *Boy as Archer*, to-day at Vienna, shows Maes displaying the romance and charm that were setting in over the art of the Sixteen-hundreds as they drew to their close; when art, leaving Holland and Flanders, was about to step into France and England, carried thereto on the wings of the Dutch and Flemish inspiration—an art that was above all to come to distinction in the glorification of childhood.

Living within the years of Nicolaes Maes, CASPAR NETSCHER was born in 1639, and, though born at Heidelberg, we must account him amongst the later Dutchmen called the "Little Masters," since he served his apprenticeship to his art under Terborch at Deventer. He, at twenty, started to roam towards Italy; but becoming enamoured of a pretty young Flemish woman of Liège whilst at Bordeaux, he got no further, married the pretty creature, turned back to Holland, and settled at The Hague, where he thenceforth lived and wrought, and where he died in the January

of 1684, nine years before Maes passed away, than whom he was seven years younger. Popular as was his art amongst the rich of Holland, painting the social indoor life of the upper classes in the manner of his master Terborch, he had neither his breadth of handling nor his force; but his detail and finish caught the Dutch love of minute excellence; and the affectation of pseudo-classicism in portraiture, which the domination of the Grand Monarque of France was bringing into the vogue, made a wide demand for the work of Netscher's hands amongst the great. He further bridges the gap between the great Dutchmen and the Flemish masters of the Sixteen-hundreds and the passing of art into France and England. You may see a couple of boys *Blowing Bubbles* and a *Maternal Instruction* painted by him that hang upon the walls of the National Gallery; and a *Portrait of a Child* in the Wallace Collection.

Netscher's son, CONSTANTINE NETSCHER, who lived from 1678 to 1722, still further accentuated the new movement — indeed Constantine Netscher might better be classed with the earlier Frenchmen of Louis the Fourteenth, or with Kneller and Lely in England, than with the makers of the Dutch achievement. No better example of this surrender to the coming vogue of the Seventeen-hundreds could be found than his charming *Jeune Princesse*, at the Louvre, who trips it in a pleasant garden, her pseudo-classic draperies flying in pseudo-classic swirls about her dainty pseudo-classic body, and pseudo-classic sandals on her feet.

Yes. King Sun, Louis of France, has conquered Europe.



CHAPTER NINE

WHEREIN RARER TREASURE IS DISCOVERED TO BE GROWING IN THE STREETS OF SEVILLE THAN SPAIN'S GREAT GALLEONS POURED THEREINTO

THE Spanish genius, despite its southern blood, was strangely akin to the Dutch — akin in realism; akin in splendour of technical power. Whether this were largely due to the fact that it created itself in the presence of nature, with little influence from tradition; or whether it were influenced, more than is suspected, by its rough touch with the Netherlands (and it is more than likely), the fact remains that the kinship of its supreme master VELAZQUEZ with Hals and Rembrandt is far more pronounced than is its relationship in any way with its southern neighbour Italy which would have seemed the more likely cousin and inspirer of it.

Yet neighbourhood seems to be of little weight in this elusive business of genius making. We see Holland and Spain with the same aim — realism; evolving the same artistry — impressionism; discarding the fancy, whether in religious stories or in the mythologies; and when pushed to the "Historic Subjects" by necessity, simply calling in the passers-by of the street, and, hav-

ing arranged a group, painting the gathering as seen, with the title merely flung in as a tag: whilst, on the other hand, in Flanders, the Flemish kin of the Dutch were ever looking to Italy — Rubens painting in the "grand manner," even though his Flemish lustiness would out; and Van Dyck out-Italianising the Italies.

In nothing was the triumph of the Spanish genius more marked than in the truthful record of its vision of childhood. The Dutch, as has been seen, having flung off the Catholic faith, the beautifying of the altars of their creed was thenceforth denied to them; the church-door was slammed in the face of such as wrought with the brush and palette and paint-pot; their art had to turn, or by instinct turned, in lieu of church decoration, to the portrayal of the life of the people, to the glorification of the home and the rough humours of the tavern, to the fields, to the painting of pastorals and of cattle. But, for the Spaniard, steeped in the Catholicism and the picturesque traditions of the Church, there was no such reason for realism — unless it be that the Dutch art stirred it to that end. However that may be, both Velazquez and Murillo painted real children, content just to state their character as children; Velazquez at first the urchins of the street, then the stiff children of the palace, the princes and princesses of the Blood Royal; Murillo the children of the street until he lost his Spanish vision behind the academic spectacles.

To cancel from the mighty achievement of Velazquez the great portraits of children painted by him were to reduce largely the splendour of his magnificence. For who doubts to-day that his impressionism did create children to more profound purpose than

did the more academic vision of Murillo, who for close on a couple of centuries was raised by bookish men to the throne of art in Spain from which he has now been plucked?

Let us be clear upon this label of "Impressionism"; since the printed word, plied by ignorant minds, has too much bewildered thought upon it.

Art, whether uttered in colour or speech or form, whether in paintings or letters or sculpture, must find the music of its utterance, the beauty of its craftsmanship, through one of two means: either it must find utterance in the classic realm in which line creates by its chaste severities of form and holds the masses subject to it; or it must state itself by general impressionism — by setting the masses in harmonious relation, value on value, light against dark, making line subject to such massing until the impression looms out as a whole. Every man, the moment he essays to create art, has to choose between these two methods of communion with his fellows.

As art rises to full flower, the more profound utterance of impressionism usurps the dominance of line, opening up a wider gamut, a deeper and more resounding orchestration, with all the added capacity of suggestion and the hauntingness that are in mystery — impressionism gives the hand's skill its supreme power of utterance, bringing into the art the widest powers of statement from the gossamer lyricism of light to the dramatic deeps of blackest profundity, the suggestive hauntingness of deep shadows.

The classic art, being subject to law, is ever beloved of academies; and the merely literary man ever leaps to judge painting by them. Impressionism is ever the weapon of the rebel. Of

the classic giants were the Greeks, as was Michelangelo the giant of the Renaissance — as were, in the Flemish achievement, Rubens and Van Dyck. But in Holland and Spain was born Impressionism — Rembrandt and Frans Hals caught the mood of the moment and set it down in undying fashion — and in far Spain was born the man who was to carry it to supreme achievement in portraiture, him whom they call Velazquez.

And if there was one subject that benefited as much as another by impressionism, it was the recording of the fleeting thing that is childhood.

To the employment of impressionism in light and shade created by Rembrandt, of brushing by Frans Hals, Velazquez was to add the impressionism of colour values, using the subtleties of tones in such master-fashion as had aforetime been undreamed of; and he wrought his supreme art to no more astounding purpose than in his portrayal of children. Lacking in imagination, without creative ideas, he concentrated all his powers upon realism, diffusing through his hand's skill a poetic sense over all he did that yielded, through the music of colour and of light and shade, a dramatic vision of character that sets him upon the topmost heights of the world's achievement in art.

You shall see in no work more markedly than in the art of Velazquez and of Rembrandt how, the moment that painting passes from classicism to impressionism, it at once reaches out to a vastness that brings all the greater and more majestic activities of all the arts together. Before the work of Velazquez, you are not only in the presence of painting, but you are moved as by the sense that is stirred by noble architecture, by sculpture, by music, by drama.

What time this fantastic world of humanity labelled the air it breathed and the earth it stood upon, the altars at which it worshipped, and the cut of the clothes that it wore, as being sixteen hundred years of age (so far as age signified against the æons), the city of Seville in Spain was the city of the South. Upon her busy wharves was unladen the whole wealth of the Western Indies — to her sailed proudly Spain's majestic galleons — here were the gates to the New World over seas. But of the vast wealth that was poured into her streets, none of it all was to be so rich to her fame, so winged with immortality, as that which she was herself to bring forth, little witting of her splendour, in a small child who, without ringing of church bells or public proclamation, was born to be her chief and enduring source of fame through his mother's name of VELAZQUEZ.

The child Velazquez, son of a Portuguese lawyer, Juan de Silva, practising at Seville, and of his wife Geronima Velazquez, of an ancient and noble family of Spain, was born at Seville in the June of 1599, a few months after Van Dyck saw the light in the Spanish Netherlands. His father, wisely setting aside the snobbish tendency of the day, on seeing that the clever schoolboy's bent was towards art, apprenticed him at an early age to Francisco Herrera, a great artist and of original gifts, but a devil of a man, whose quarrelsome readiness to enter into frays, and vile and uncontrollable temper, must have been a sad trial to the sensitive and refined lad during his short year of 'prenticeship. But the violent Herrera had discovered impressionism — was using long brushes and painting the mood of the thing seen, detesting all classic ideals, hating all Italian ways, content just to paint

the thing he saw — and that forthright teaching of Herrera's bit into the little fellow's mind and never left it. From Herrera's studio the lad went to the refined atmosphere of the school of the mediocre painter Pacheco, a cultured and well-bred man, whose only daughter Juana de Miranda the young fellow was to marry before he was nineteen. How astounding was not only the youth's promise but his achievement may be seen in those so-called "Kitchen-pieces," studies from low life, wrought before manhood — one of which, *The Water-Carrier of Seville*, painted by the youthful Velazquez about the time of his marriage, he himself so favoured that he took it with him as proof of his skill when, under Pacheco's social influence and admiration, Velazquez at twenty-three went to Madrid with a considerable reputation in his own town, but failed to get an audience of the young King, Philip the Fourth, who had in that year come to the throne, a youth of sixteen. But Velazquez returned to his native Seville leaving a powerful newly-made friend in the King's palace, the Court-chaplain, Juan de Fonseca. Even thus early, in his "Kitchen-pieces," we find Velazquez painting boys with intense realism and truth and insight.

Time has, in truth, its revenges. The King who was too busy to see Velazquez is remembered to-day chiefly by the paintings of him who has kept his foolish name and features immortal. Philip the Fourth came to the throne of his father without any of the gifts for lordship over a great people, but richly dowered with all the pretence to that end. His dignity was a hollow affair, compact of an almost insane belief in his greatness, which showed itself in a stiff aloofness that took the form of complete silence

for weeks at a time — a pedantic stickling for the rigid etiquette and ceremonial of the Court — and so utter a lack of any sense of humour that he looked askance at any show of mirth as being derogatory to his exalted state. He was known to have laughed three times during his long years of kingship — unfortunately not one laugh in the three was at his own preposterous image in the mirror. Of real dignity he had no title. Yet his fault lay not in his incapacity for kingship as in his insane belief in that heaven-sent capacity. At least it may be accounted to his foolish credit that the decay of Spain, the land torn with strife, the madness of the humiliating wars with the Netherlands and with France that brought his reign and his people into utter contempt, the loss of Portugal that plumbed the deep of that contempt, were not his doing so much as his lack of doing. As King Charles the First of England, as weak and pretentious and obstinate as he, was governed by strong-willed blunderers, so was this weak and pallid man of straw. From the day that he came to the throne, he was governed by his favourite, the conceited and aggressive blunderer Count Olivarez, whom he made Duke of San Lucar.

But, like Charles of England, Philip was a cultured soul, loving the arts and the drama and literature, and encouraging them, and not a little skilled in the practice of them. He was unlike Charles of England, whose life at least was clean, in that he was ever entangled in some petticoat — a loose habit which the egregious and crafty Olivarez not only encouraged but abetted and pandered to, even supplying the fair charmers, thereby holding the affection of his deeply religious and superstitious master, and in-

creasing His Majesty's natural sloth and indolence in affairs of state.

Arraying himself in a cloak of conservatism, the young King, like all men who build their state on decayed and outworn foundations, looked to a strong man to shield him from the shock of progress. Now, to the Reactionary, the Violent Man ever appears as the Strong Man. Olivarez was that — as violent and as full-blooded of purpose as is strong wine of drunkenness, that brims in the full beaker.

Don Gaspar Guzman, Count Olivarez, born in Rome in 1587, coming to Madrid early in life, was a man that looked like carrying imperial intention; and the seeming strength and abounding energy of the man of thirty-four soon won the admiration of the pallid and sluggish young King; the crafty pandering of the adventurer to the young fellow's vices completed his conquest — he put beautiful women in the young King's way with deeper intention than to win his friendship; for by estranging the youth from his young Queen, he sapped the influence of Isabella of Bourbon, about the only capable brain for noble statecraft in all Spain, as this virtuous and queenly woman proved in abundance during the time that she governed in her husband's absence whilst he commanded the army in the Catalonian campaign.

Philip the Fourth's forty-four years of sovereignty were to be one long pomposity of misrule, of commercial decline for Spain, and imperial wreckage painted scarlet red with futile wars — a career built upon the narrow ruts and obstinate follies of those that had gone before him, from whom he learnt no lesson but to outfool their foolishness.

Olivarez early commanded the King's will; was created Duke of San Lucar; and proceeded to botch the affairs of state without losing the King's favour, even when Portugal flung off allegiance. His astounding energy and untiring industry, which would have pushed to majestic achievement a noble mind, became the worst instrument of an obstinate conceit and headstrong wrongfulness guided solely by the pettiest personal ambition. For the great affairs of state which he set himself to control, he had no single qualification of statesmanship. He was ever the dupe of French Richelieu, whose cunning employed him to his will. His very cruelty and knavery and unscrupulousness, his low cunning, and his hardness of brain, brought nothing but disaster to the state: he created civil war, he lost whole provinces, and it was due to his muddling that Portugal roughly shook off the sovereignty of Spain. He was the comic-opera Strong Man, the god of the Music-hall; and it was in keeping with his comic-operatic bull-eyed efforts at greatness that he fell from power through a squabble with the King's nurse! Velazquez he befriended; and Velazquez did for him with courtier-grace what best he could — painting him seated upon a prancing charger in all the pomp and panoply of war, hidalgic, with all his fierce moustaches and all his armour on, pointing his conquering baton over the subservient world — he who had the maddest ambition to play the conqueror, but never knew war, never heard a shot fired in battle, was no soldier, and conquered nothing, nor taught others to conquer.

Seizing power from behind the throne, encouraging the sluggish habits and indolence of the young King, he turned what moments of energy flickered within the pallid-faced ruler towards

his love of artistic and literary pursuits; and Philip, happier in his theatricals and bull-fights and artistic and literary tastes, poured forth his translations from the Italian and acted in comedies and farces, all unwitting of the farcical figure he was cutting in the eyes of the ages as, with pompous mien, he posed whilst his vast empire fell in ruins about him.

However, the chaplain, Juan de Fonseca, to his undying credit, hotly urged the Count-Duke Olivarez, the all-powerful favourite of the young King, then nineteen, to call Velazquez to Madrid the year after the young artist's baffled visit; and Velazquez was summoned, being given on the 6th of the April of 1623, in his twenty-fourth year, lodgings at the Prado, and a handsome monthly allowance of some twenty ducats. Four months later the young King gave Velazquez his first sitting for the equestrian portrait which has since vanished. It was the beginning of that long and close intimacy between the two men that was to last the remaining thirty-seven years of the artist's life, during which he was loaded with honours, ending in the supreme office which was to cost him his life. The King soon took him into his strange friendship, gave him apartments in the Palace closer at hand, visiting him daily; and in the presence of Velazquez alone he seems to have put off that flaccid mask of nonentity that he took to be dignity; unbent from his ridiculous silences; spoke freely in his presence; and put off the pose of statuary and of haughty bearing within which he hid his empty and bored soul from the world.

It was in the year that Velazquez entered the palace of his King that there came to Madrid the young Prince of Wales, with

the Duke of Buckingham who controlled the will of James the First of England, as he was afterwards to control — indeed already controlled — that of Charles, when he became King after him. The Prince and favourite were intriguing for the marriage of Charles to a Spanish Princess; and were being secretly opposed by all the cunning of Olivarez — the beginning of a bitter hatred between Olivarez and Buckingham.

Velazquez painted the English Prince.

It was a strange meeting, this of the two kings in many ways so alike — in lordliness and ambition to be great, and wholly lacking gifts to be great — neither men fitted to be kings — both destined to bring ruin to their kingly house — both lovers of art, and lavish patrons of artists — both with sumptuous and expensive tastes — both with a godlike estimate of the divine majesty of kings that came close to insanity.

To Velazquez at any rate the meeting brought nothing but honours; and from honour to honour, and wider and ever wider honours, he was to rise. On the edge of the young Spaniard's thirtieth year, Rubens came to the Spanish Court; and in the close friendship of the two artists that followed, the great Flemish master advised the young Spaniard towards the Italian tour on which he started in his thirtieth year, being received in Venice by the Spanish Ambassador with honours befitting the Blood Royal. But, fortunately for his art, though whilst in Italy he copied from the works of the great Venetians and studied the masterpieces of Michelangelo and Raphael, he rejected from his own artistry all hint of these on returning to the Palace of the King at Madrid, after his three years' absence — to the painting

of his immortal series of portraits, of which the first was of the King's eldest son, the manly little fellow, *Don Baltazar Carlos*, born to the King in the October of 1629, the year that Velazquez had gone to Italy. Indeed, from the time he returned to the Royal Palace he painted this child again and again until the lad's early death at sixteen (1645), the year after his mother the unhappy Isabella de Bourbon passed away, with whom, after the fall of Olivarez, the King had been reconciled a while before she went to her grave.

The portraits of little Don Baltazar Carlos by Velazquez are masterpieces all, whether in the far-famed superb equestrian portraits, or standing with his gun and dog, or as an infant in petticoats with his loathsome dwarf. Boyhood, in the pose of boyhood playing the part of man, is ever brought out with consummate purpose. In the famous portrait of the plucky little twelve-year-old Prince astride a prancing horse in the so-called *Riding-School*, by some said to be painted by Mazo, the son-in-law of Velazquez, the minister Olivarez is seen standing in the middle distance, whilst, from a balcony of the Palace, Philip the Fourth and his Queen and little daughter look down upon the elaborate prancing, in the picture painted just before the fall and disgrace of the Count-Duke, and his retirement into those two years which led to madness, and from madness to death. It is pleasant to know that Velazquez had the courage to continue his friendship openly with the fallen man to whom he owed so much, when most had forsaken him; and a bright page in the life of the King is written in the record that he showed to Velazquez no spite or resentment for that manliness.

LINFANTE. MARGVERITE

Velazquez went to Italy again, but this time on a mission from the King to procure works of art for the Royal Palace; and he now travelled as one of the greatest artists of his age. During his three years' absence, the King married a second time, choosing as his consort Mariana of Austria in 1649.

On the return of Velazquez from Italy to Madrid in 1651, he was appointed, in this his fifty-second year, Aposentador del Rey, which would appear to be a Marshal to the Royal Court — an office richly endowed, but involving a heavy drain on the time of the genius who had been better employed in his art; for, whether removing the table-cloth at the table of the King or arranging the pageants of his elaborate progresses throughout the land, one grudges the hours lost to the creation of the art of which Velazquez was lord. Five years afterwards he painted that famous masterpiece of portraiture, *The Maids of Honour* (Las Meniñas), wherein the new Queen's first-born child, the little Princess, the Infanta Margarita, is seen in a large room surrounded by her obsequious ladies-in-waiting and her repulsive dwarfs — the King and Queen reflected in a mirror, and Velazquez himself standing before his easel. It needed all the master skill of Velazquez to paint what there was of childhood to be seen in the unchildlike garments and atmosphere that surrounded a princess of the Court of Spain; and, of a truth, little of childhood peeps from the fantastic figure, but rather childhood trussed, childhood robbed of the freshness and naturalness that are of the very fragrance of infancy. And the majesty of the whole thing — one of the supreme works of man's hand — is sullied by the vile taste of admitting into the very front of the superb design the

hideous abortions of dwarfs into a child's life. Yet never did even the art of Velazquez surpass this in the mastery of the tone-values that create its aerial perspective, and in its sense as of splendid melody. It is said of this picture that the King, in his enthusiasm, snatched up a brush and painted the red cross of Santiago upon the figure of Velazquez, as being the only thing lacking to complete its perfection.

This high honour was granted to the artist after numberless snobberies and evasions by the hide-bound dignitaries of the Court, who assailed the pedigree of the greatest genius of the art of Spain.

Of the many portraits of the King's children painted by Velazquez, one of the most exquisite is that of the sedate little Princess — the *Infanta Margarita*, at the Louvre — not only as a picture of small girlhood, but for the subtlety of its greys and colour-values. An excellent picture of infant boyhood is that of the *Prince Philip Prosper* at two years of age, now in Vienna, wherein we see the little Prince standing by a chair — the bonnie little fellow dressed in his elaborate baby petticoats, heavily braided, and with his apron on, bells depending from the waist of his ridiculous gown. Here in a chair we see the small dog, a favourite of Velazquez, painted with realistic truth rare in the work of the old masters. These two portraits of the Infanta Margarita and the boy Philip Prosper, afterwards Duke of the Asturias, in succession to the early-doomed Baltazar Carlos, were to be the last works on which the brush of Velazquez was engaged.

The honour of Aposentador del Rey was to cost art its

greatest loss. In the early part of that year of 1660 that saw the Stuart restored to the throne of England as Charles the Second, Velazquez had to go to Irun to plan the decorations of the pavilions on the Isle of Pheasants and to arrange the pageant for the betrothal of the Infanta Maria Theresa, the King's elder daughter by his first marriage, to Louis the Fourteenth of France. The fatigue bore Velazquez down — the fever that got into his bones sent him back to Madrid a dying man. He passed away in the Palace of the King in his sixty-first year, a few weeks thereafter, on the 6th of April 1660. He was scarce laid in his grave, amidst almost regal pomp, when his widow followed him.

So mighty is the art of Velazquez that men would give him all the great qualities, and shrink from criticising his shortcomings. It is true that the ascetic virtues of his art are overvaunted; that it would have raised him even higher to have interpreted the healthy passions of man than to have befouled his noble art with the paintings of the loathsome abortions of humanity called dwarfs that cause a sensation of sickness in their presence — those dwarfs and idiots that the lack of a sense of humour about the Court looked upon as funny things, a vile taste which Velazquez bowed his courtier neck to limn. Indeed, it is only too true that he not only painted these vindictive and spiteful deformities separately, but he even sullied some of his greatest canvases and limited their full splendour by introducing these loathsome idiots as the companions of little children.

Velazquez, after his death, was to pass into neglect, being

reckoned for a couple of centuries as a subordinate artist to his follower Murillo; but to-day he has come into his own again as the greatest of portrait-painters, as one of the subtlest of colourists, and, not least of all, as one of the supreme painters of children.

CHAPTER TEN

IN WHICH THE OLD ART OF SPAIN DIES OF A FALL FROM A SCAFFOLD

IN the Jewish quarter of this same busy city of Seville, that gave birth to Velazquez, was also born another child destined to become world-famous — to be known as MURILLO. Born in the last days of the December of 1617, since he was baptized on the New Year's Day of 1618, therefore some nineteen years younger than his great fellow-townsman, Velazquez, the child grew up to boyhood inclined to art. Having been apprenticed to his kinsman, the artist Juan del Castillo, the youngster was soon painting the heads of saints and sacred pictures for the South American market. But youthful ambition was stirring in his blood; early facility came with practice; and being a thrifty lad he hoarded his earnings to increase his skill in art; until, in his twenty-fourth year (1641), taking the advice of his once-studio comrade, Pedro de Moya — who had been to England and worked under Van Dyck, and by the same token transferred much of Van Dyck to the eager Murillo — the young fellow put his hoarded savings into his wallet and made for Madrid, his eyes bent on England, his eventual hope to see Italy. In Madrid the

travel-stained Murillo was kindly received by his townsman Velazquez, who set him up in spruce and dandified attire, and sought to persuade him to try a fall with fortune in the capital. News of the death of Van Dyck, and a thinly-lined purse, made the young fellow no uneager listener to the counsels of Velazquez to stay his journey there; and in Madrid the generous Painter to the King procured him ease from the cares of bread and every facility to complete his studies.

Founding his art on that of Van Dyck and Velazquez and Spagnoletto, the young artist was soon so accomplished a master that, in his twenty-seventh year (1644), Velazquez offered him letters of introduction from the King for a journey into Italy; declining which, Murillo returned to Seville in the following year and began the series of sacred pictures of the life of Saint Francis for the Franciscan convent of the city, which were the beginnings of his fame, and at once raised him to the head of the Seville school of artists.

From the time of his marriage to a lady of fortune in 1648, he being then thirty, his home became the resort of people of taste and degree. He was now creating religious masterpiece after masterpiece — those masterpieces that formed so large a part of the loot of Marshal Soult during the great French soldier's Peninsular campaign.

Indeed, a large altarpiece was to be the death of Murillo; it was from injuries received in a fall from the scaffolding whilst working upon the *Saint Catherine* at Cadiz for the church of the Capuchins that he crept home to Seville to die on the 3rd of April in 1682, in his sixty-fifth year,

leaving two sons, and a daughter in a nunnery, to mourn him.

In his earlier, bold, and vigorous manner, Murillo painted many pictures of the children of the streets; and his barefooted urchins are not only set down with force but are stated with a frank truthfulness of vision still unfettered by the convention of the more classical style that spread itself throughout his work done in his later manner, which was devoted to the sacred subject. To his paintings of children, then, he devoted his most forthright art; and if, even therein, we do not see the supreme gifts of Velazquez, at least the understanding of the guttersnipe and of the street-arab was remarkable. As he developed towards that later charm of style that holds an almost feminine grace of statement, tender to slenderness of sentiment, yet sincere if suave, he displayed a true sense of balance and style in arrangement, and made up for his lack as a great colourist by an ethereal quality which is so marked as to be known by the label of Murillo's "vaporous" (*sfumato*) style. And if he came in the after years to a prodigious vogue which his fine talents could not bear without strain, and his name for two centuries was mouthed by the inane criticism of the years as that of Spain's greatest genius in art, there is a tendency to-day only too wrongly to belittle him. For had he painted none other than the street urchins of his native Seville, he had been a man of genius. What was best in his art he wrought under the influence of Velazquez; and just as his portrait of *Don Andreas de Andrade* is amongst his finest portraits of men, so his *Two Spanish Peasant Boys* and the *Two Spanish Peasant Boys with a Negro Boy*, at Dulwich; the famous

Dice-Players, the *Grape-Eaters*, and the *Melon-Eaters*, at Munich; and the *Young Beggar*, at the Louvre, show him at his best in his realistic phase of art — his knowledge of children standing him in good stead where in his later masterpieces his infants flew across his sacred art as little angels; and his smooth and vague handling of a later day was redeemed by sympathetic insight in such work as the *Saint John and the Lamb*, now at the National Gallery.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

WHICH HAS TO DO WITH THE CHILDREN OF THE YEARS WHEN THE WORLD WORE GREAT WIGS AND MARLBOROUGH MADE HIS WARS

IT were difficult to leave the achievement of the art of the Flemish, Dutch, and Spanish schools in the painting of children without reference to three men whom we may vaguely set down as being of that vast and vague land of many States then known as Germany — Sir Peter Lely, Sir Godfrey Kneller, and Anton Raphael Mengs — for two of these, Sir Peter Lely and Sir Godfrey Kneller, were to carry on the Van Dyck Flemish tradition, with some Dutch essence mixed therewith, in England, and to influence the birth of the English genius. To France the Flemish inspiration was to bring to blossom the native genius, struggling with Italian ideals, and to overthrow those Italian ideals in final mastery.

To England the Germanic genius was to come as bearer of the Flemish tradition, at the death of Van Dyck, in the person of a handsome dandified son of a captain of infantry; which gallant captain, one Van der Faes, was in garrison at Soest in Westphalia in 1618, when there was born to him a son, Peter van

der Faes. The soldier changed his name from Van der Faes to Lely or Lilly, and the boy's name became Peter Lely by consequence; and as such was to come to fame as Sir Peter Lely.

The youth Peter studied art under Pieter Franz de Grebber at Haarlem for a couple of years; but at the death of Van Dyck in 1641, the young fellow of twenty-three set his eyes towards England, where Van Dyck had reached to wealth, the tales of which and of whose splendour were borne to Haarlem. So it came about that Peter Lely made the sea-journey, and set foot in the land that had done Van Dyck such great honour.

Peter was a bright fellow; he soon saw that his "landscapes with historical figures" were going to win him no success: he forthwith set them aside for the portraiture in which it was abundantly clear lay all hope of encouragement at the Court of the Stuart; and to the portrait he took, imitating the style of Van Dyck — as you may see in that delightful child-picture that hangs in the National Gallery, of the *Girl feeding a Parrot*, in which to Van Dyck's good-breeding is added a certain daintiness that is all Lely's own — an added fragrance of childhood of which the greater painter knew nothing — an added charm of colour that comes nearer to the harmonies that interpret young girlhood than all the splendour and magnificence that the greater artist ever essayed.

The evidence of Lely's indebtedness to Van Dyck is perhaps most marked in the superb portrait of the handsome debonair lad, *Henry Sydney*, in which we see, so fitly arrayed as a golden-haired young god going a-hunting with two greyhounds on leash,

the boy whose romantic life was to lead him to the Earldom of Romney, which was to be created for him and die with him. Romance has ever hovered about his house; and young Henry Sydney drank of its intoxicating cup to the full. It was fitting that Lely should paint him — Lely whose art breathes the spirit of romance — in his boyhood, with the godlike atmosphere about him. Of all men influenced by Van Dyck, Lely came nearest to the master's genius; and in some things surpassed the greater man. It is a habit to decry Lely and Kneller in these days; but the time is coming when they will reach to their old honour. In this handsome presentment of Henry Sydney, Lely's debt to Van Dyck is marked, let there be no question of it; but there is a breeziness throughout it all, a boyishness, the boyishness of a young lordling, of which Van Dyck had not the secret.

It was a happy chance that it fell to Lely's genius, not to that of Van Dyck, to render the boy. Henry Sydney came of a romantic house, and was not its least romantic figure, being youngest son (fourth) of the second Earl of Leicester — and own brother to Algernon Sydney the famous patriot, who suffered death on the scaffold at Tower Hill on a bleak December day of 1683 for the Rye House plot against the Merry Monarch, he whose name will live as long as Hampden's is cherished by the free-born of England; he who insisted that Christianity was a divine philosophy of the mind that needed no divine worship or visible church; the "stiffest" of all republicans, his rough and boisterous temper was such an enemy to all that looked like monarchy, that he could not even brook Cromwell being made Protector. The younger brother, Henry Sydney, contributed zeal-

ously to the Revolution, and was created by William and Mary by consequence, on their coming to the throne, Baron and Viscount Sydney, and in the April of 1694 Earl of Romney, to pass away in 1704, the year of Blenheim, unmarried and without heirs.

At the marriage of the Princess Mary, the eldest daughter of Charles the First (whom we have seen in Van Dyck's family group of Charles's Five Children), with Prince William the Second of Orange in 1643, two years after Van Dyck's death, Lely was presented to the King; and painted the portraits of Charles the First, Prince William of Orange, and of the King's daughter Mary.

The fierce Outbreak of the Civil War does not seem to have daunted Lely, for he dared to stay in England during the Commonwealth, painting the portrait of Cromwell and the celebrities of the time; nor did he offend the Royalists thereby, since, at Charles the Second's coming to the throne, the King appointed Lely his principal painter.

Lely was now supreme in art in England, pouring forth portraits of the beauties and celebrities; nor does his merry-making face look as if his genial company would be distasteful to the King, who made him a baronet in 1679.

From 1662, two years after the Stuart came into his own, Lely lived in the Piazza in Covent Garden, his home until his death. And how he dominated art in England we may see by glimpses into Pepys his immortal diary. On the 18th of June 1661, "I walked to Lilly's, the painter's, where I saw, among other rare things, the Duchesse of York, her whole body, sitting in state in a chair, in white satin; and another of the King's, that is not

finished; most rare things" — and sly Pepys straightway "gives the fellow something that showed them to us," in order that he may have a peep at others soon — "thence to Wright's, the painter's; but, Lord! the difference that is between their two works." . . . . On the 20th of October he goes again to "Mr. Lilly's, the great painter," who tells him that "he should not be at leisure these three weeks," which astonishes Pepys, who, with delightful inquisitiveness, goes in to see "in what pomp his table was laid for himself to go to dinner" of this man so greatly in the vogue. On the 18th of July in 1665, again, Pepys is astonished at the vogue for Lely — "so full of work Lilly is, that he was fain to take his table-book out to see how his time is appointed, and appointed six days hence for him (Sir William Pen) to come between seven and eight in the morning."

But Sir Peter Lely was to find a rival in London town before he died.

Four or five years after Lely first stepped ashore to England, there had been born at Lübeck, in 1646, to an Inspector of Mines — who had been compelled by the wars to leave his native Eisleben and settle in that town, where he married — a son, his second son, whom he christened Godfrey. As the child Godfrey Kneller, or Kniller, sprang up to boyhood, he was sent to Leyden to be trained for the army, studying mathematics and fortification to that end. But at Leyden the artist in the lad came out, so dominating all other instincts, that his father, discovering the young fellow's bent, encouraged it, sending him to Rembrandt at Amsterdam, where Kneller learnt his tricks of thumb under that mighty genius. After leaving Rembrandt's studio, the young

Kneller went for awhile to Rembrandt's pupil, Ferdinand Bol. His twenty-sixth year (1672) saw him in Rome under Italian masters. At Rome he set foot on the highroad to fame, winning large repute with several historical pictures; so much so, that, on leaving for Venice, he was handsomely received by the great houses of that city and was soon engaged in painting the portraits of many of the chief families. Leaving Italy, he went to Hamburg; but in Hamburg he was not destined long to dwell. Hamburg was his stepping-stone to high success and wider fame: it was at Hamburg in 1674, in his twenty-eighth year, that he was persuaded by a merchant, one Banks, to try his fortune in London — in that London where Rubens and Van Dyck had been welcomed like princes and had found a goldmine and knighthood and high honour — in that London where Sir Peter Lely had leaped at once to honour and renown and fortune, and was then in such wide demand that he could not accept all his offers. To London, therefore, Kneller went in King Charles the Second's mid-reign, to leap into the favour of the Merry Monarch straightway, and to find wealth and honours and renown. He was soon painting the King and his Court.

Lely was now on the edge of sixty; Kneller but twenty-eight. So rapid and facile was the younger artist that when Charles the Second, to save himself trouble, sat to Lely and Kneller at the same time, the portrait by Kneller was finished before Lely had well laid in the foundations of his design — or, as Walpole puts it, Lely's portrait was dead-coloured only.

There was full room for both men; the extravagance of the Merry Monarch's Court was prodigious; its picturesqueness and

love of artistic things could scarce well be surpassed; and the portrait was in almost universal demand. But the brush was soon to fall from Lely's fingers and leave Kneller without rival at Court. Lely was painting the handsome Duchess of Somerset when he was seized with apoplexy and passed away from the scene of his triumphs amidst the tools of the art that he had beautified and enhanced by the dignity and charm and fascination of his style. He was buried by torchlight in the Church of St. Paul's in Covent Garden, where his bust by Grinling Gibbons was a hundred years afterwards unfortunately destroyed by the fire of 1795. So died and was buried in 1680 the elder of the two famous men whose names are a household word, whose art limned not only the celebrated beauties of King Charles the Second's sumptuous, gay, not to say giddy and naughty Court, but whose untiring industry and handsome gifts have made to live for us in nearly every important home throughout the land the features of those who trod the romantic stage of the later Sixteen-hundreds. The other, Kneller, surviving into King George the First's days, painted for us the beauties of Dutch William's and Queen Anne's Augustan age and the big-wigged dignified folk of Marlborough's splendid years.

The number of portraits painted by these two men was something prodigious. Kneller's facility and rapidity are a byword. He was soon the Court-painter, without a peer, and with a wide practice of which his astounding rapidity of skill and quick industry gave him the power to take fullest advantage. Nor was his repute an island affair; his fame was European; he was known in France, where he painted Louis the Fourteenth, amongst other

celebrities of France and Spain and distant lands. His vogue in England needs no further proof than the vast number of family portraits that still remain to us in the great houses throughout the land. There can have been scarce a single person of distinction or rank in his day that he did not paint. The friend of that brilliant group of literary, political, and artistic men, that his friend Pope has made famous by poem or satire, he in his turn immortalised them all. It were impossible to understand the age of Charles the Second, of William and Mary, and of Queen Anne, without the art of Lely and Kneller. And as Lely painted the "Beauties" of the Merry Monarch's Court and "The Flagmen of the Fleet" (or Admirals), so for Queen Mary the Second, Dutch William's spouse, Kneller painted the "Beauties" at Hampton Court, being knighted by William in 1692.

The gracious and dignified style of the man, so well suited to the presentment of the big-wigged dandies and celebrities of the days of William and Mary and of Queen Anne — so gifted in limning the beauties of the splendid times of the last Stuarts — painted for us more than one charming child of the period most astounding well in that studio of his house in Covent Garden, hard by Peter Lely's — his home for some twenty-four years, which he only left in 1705, within a year after that day in August that made Marlborough's name a dread to the enemies of England in the fierce victory of Blenheim, in order to settle at Whitton House by Twickenham (since known as Kneller Hall, the school for military musicians). Here he lived in handsome style through Queen Anne's great days of glory, the supreme painter of the England of his splendid time; here he was the

handsome lord of the house when George the First in 1715, the year after he came to the throne, made him a baronet — for German George, though he "hated bainting and boetry," loved a German; and here at Twickenham Sir Godfrey Kneller died in 1723, George the First still being King over us, and lies buried in the old church there — his monument, with Pope's epitaph carved upon it, being set up in Westminster Abbey.

And of all his hand's skill, what is more fitting than that he should have painted the two daughters of "handsome Jack Churchill," the great Duke of Marlborough, *The Ladies Henrietta and Anne Churchill*, the two fair-haired girls who were to carry on the descent of this mighty ducal house, in whom the features of their famous father and mother are so marked — features so dominating, that their descendant of to-day, Mr. Winston Churchill, might be the twin brother to the elder girl!

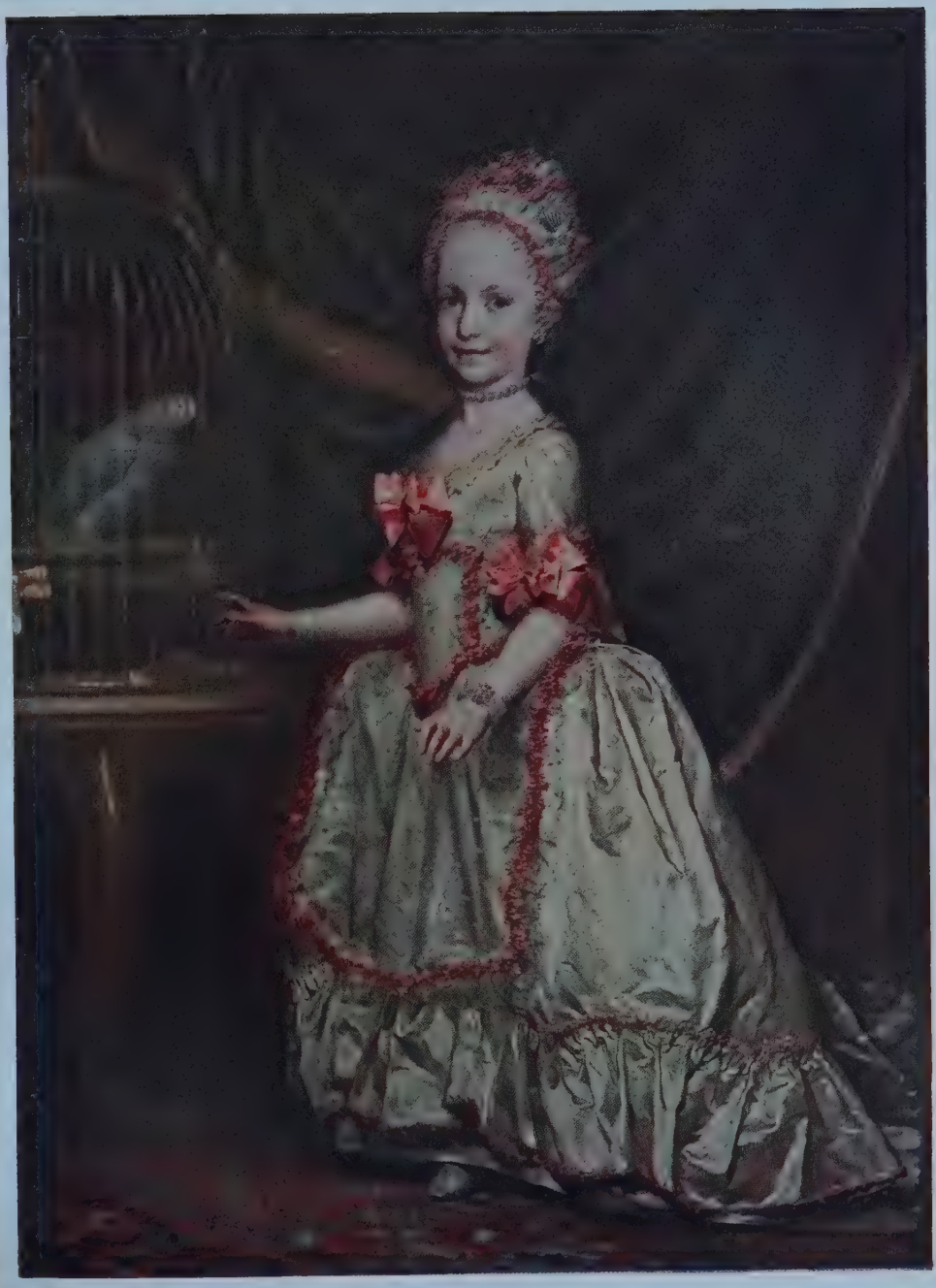
In the year 1706, the year of Ramillies, an Act of Parliament received the assent of Queen Anne, whereby the great Duke's titles and honours should go to his daughters and their heirs male successively; and by that deed, this little Lady Henrietta became Duchess of Marlborough, marrying the Earl of Godolphin; she died in 1733, and lies buried in Westminster Abbey, her only son William, Marquis of Blandford, dying before her. The little Lady Anne became Countess of Sunderland, and her second son, Charles, it was that succeeded at the death of his aunt Henrietta to the honours of his great house as the third Duke of Marlborough, who commanded a brigade at Dettingen; her third son John becoming ancestor of the Earl Spencer.

CHAPTER TWELVE

WHEREIN IS HINT THAT SPECTACLES MAY NOT ALWAYS HELP THE SIGHT

IF it be difficult to class the genius of Lely or Kneller as aught but German, though Dutch and Flemish their training and vision, and English their life and achievement; it is even more difficult to class as anything exactly but German the art of one who was neither Dutch nor Flemish nor Spanish by birth or blood, yet who, though he lived near upon a hundred years after the great Dutch and Flemish and Spanish achievement in art had passed away, caught much of the spirit of all the three and wedded them to his eighteenth-century skill.

Out of Bohemia, born in 1728, came MENGS, the cosmopolitan — who saw the light at Aussig on the Elbe, hard by the Saxon frontier, across which, at Dresden, his Danish miniature-painting father was Court-painter to the Saxon King; the miniature-painter christening the child Anton Raphael Mengs after his art-gods Correggio and Raphael. The child was nursed for the artistic career; at thirteen the boy, taken by the fond father to Italy, was studying the works of the great masters at an age when a healthy child is playing at robbers and skilled in plaguing



his elders — to return to Dresden in 1744, a youth of sixteen so astoundingly skilled in the use of coloured chalks that his King, Augustus the Third, granted him an allowance of 600 thalers. At eighteen the youth with his admiring father was on his way again to Rome, the Mecca of the art-student of the Sixteen-hundreds and Seventeen-hundreds — the blight and destroyer of the hand's skill and eye's vision of most that entered her gates with promise never to be fulfilled — and he painted there *The Holy Family* that made him famous. To Rome he went with all his soul as well as with all his heart and ambition — joining the Catholic Church; and soon thereafter marrying the beautiful girl who had sat as model for his Madonna in the picture that brought him at a leap into fame. That fame became prodigious. It has waned. And even to-day official dispensers of the laurels of Immortality apologise for him, within such phrases as "if no genius," even whilst they would praise him. But Mengs will come into some share of his antique fame again, if never into that magnificence that bore him down by weight of overpraise. The laurels that he once wore as lord of the fresco and the ceiling-piece and painter of the sacred masterpiece are wilted, and will never again know the sap of evergreenness; for such works were wrought with a hand cold as death that essayed to create an art out of the study of the art of the great dead — and no man shall better the thing he imitates. But Mengs was of the North; and his vision became the earnest vision of the North when he was thrust, much against his will, into the presence of nature; indeed, when he stood before the Child, nearly all but nature deserted him. He will live in his portraiture, and not the

least part of his immortality will rest in his portraiture of children. For he returned awhile to Dresden as Court-painter in 1749, his twenty-first year; and the portrait brought out his full powers; even though he wore the spectacles of the great dead of the Fifteen-hundreds. But his heart fretted the while for his beloved Rome, whither he betook himself again in his twenty-fourth year, and was soon under the influence of that Winckelmann of comic name but earnest classic-gazing eyes who turned his mind to the love of ancient Rome and Greece — towards which his writings were also soon to be chief guide not only to Mengs but to the decaying art of the France of the last years of Louis Quinze.

To the dreamy Mengs the unburying of Pompeii, begun in 1755, made a deep appeal.

Mengs did not, and could not, escape the charm and blithe atmosphere of the French spirit that took possession of the Seventeen-hundreds; but he avoided most of the trivialities and froth whereby the art of the Italy of that day translated the French elegance into bonbon-boxdom. It was in his thirty-third year that he was called to Spain by Charles the Third, her King, being made Court-painter to His Majesty; and there, for ten years, under the overwhelming force of the art that Velazquez had wrought, he painted, his vision enhanced and his eyes opened thereby to realism — painted portraits, amongst them some portraits of children, that, whilst they hold much of the fantastic pose and stiffness of the gloomy Court of sombre pride that Velazquez had stated in such consummate fashion, show also that the jocund century of the Seventeen-hundreds had brought a

smile even into the palace of the Kings of Spain. Velazquez almost warmed to life the cold art of Mengs.

The quaint little *Princess with the Parrot*, for all her stiff air of the Court, is possessed of the charm of little-girlhood; and this painting has in turn inspired at least one other masterpiece of our own time. In another portrait of a child, the little fellow —for it is a boy-child, in spite of petticoats and laced girlish cap—shows *A Young Prince*, as the Order of the Golden Fleece dangling upon his breast proves. The same child appears again with his little baby kinsman in the portrait entitled *The Two Young Princes*. All three pictures show that mirth has entered into the nursery of the palace of the Spanish Kings; and the children, for all their elaborate dress and stilted magnificence, are children even before they are princelings—though princeling is writ large over them. Indeed, in all three children, not only do we find a strange hint of the air that Velazquez created, and set with such skill about the princelings of his day (so quaintly old-world when wrought into the gay and frolicsome years of the Seventeen-hundreds), but all the little ones show the full Hapsburg underlip that persists in the Royal Family of Spain to our own day.

Mengs returned to Rome in 1771, his health shattered at forty-three by the climate of the land that so greatly honoured him. The air of the palace had stricken him down. The winter of 1772 he passed at Naples, keenly interested in the wall-paintings of Pompeii and Herculaneum. He went back to Madrid only to be further broken in health, struggling back to Rome to die in 1779, in the fifty-ninth year of his age and at the height of his powers.

To Mengs was almost given the clear vision that had created

the profound art of impressionism in Rembrandt and Velazquez, as it had nearly been granted to Murillo; but the soaking of the lad's mind in the tradition of the classical art of the great dead of Italy forced his hand's skill to the Italian artistry; and the spectacles of these great Italian dead thwarted his earnest gaze from nature and turned it to tradition and style, robbing him of the larger adventure in art which might have been his, and leading him into the tide of the fashion of his years. There is something fit in the cosmopolitanism of the art that flamed forth from his so cosmopolitan soul and body, the blood of which was of Scandinavia, the breath of Saxony, the inspiration Flemish and Italian and Spanish, the schooling of Rome, and the speech French with a strong Italian accent.

A waggish story is told of an artist that, being weak in his aspirates and ambitious to shine as a gentleman, after a visit to Italy he adopted an Italian-English jargon for his daily utterance; and of another that, having gone for a week-end to Boulogne, he fell on the quay and broke his accent. There was not a little of this in the destiny of Mengs — never setting eyes on the land of his kin, brought up in Saxon speech and surroundings, trained to think of nature as being the canvases of the great dead Italians, he went to Spain, and, under the truthful and austere gaze of Velazquez, opened his eyes and discovered nature through over-dressed children that played the handsome game of life amidst gilt French furniture. And the marvel is that he made them live; the greater marvel that he saw them even smile — and did not forbid them.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

WHICH HAS TO DO WITH ASSASSINATION BY ORDER OF THE KING, AND THE DISCOVERY OF AN ARTIST BY THE CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD

IN that year of 1610 in which Henry of Navarre, the great King of France, signed the treaty of Halle — whereby he undertook to support the Princes of Brandenburg and Neuburg in their claim to the lands of the dead Duke of Cleves, and thereby fell foul of Austria, Spain, and Milan — though Henry of Navarre was no longer a young man, the adulterous blood of the Bourbons still rioted hot within him. He became enamoured of the beautiful Charlotte de Montmorency, wife of Henry, Prince de Condé. His reckless pursuit of the girl sent Condé and his Princess to seek refuge at the Viceregal Court of the Archduke Albrecht at Brussels. Henry threatened war unless the beautiful girl were given up. The Jesuits and more violent partisans of Rome leaped at the scandal to excite the people against the tolerant King who had passed into law the Edict of Nantes, vowing that he was plotting the overthrow and dethronement of the Pope, the end of Catholicism, and the making of the Huguenots supreme in France. Henry of Navarre, before hurrying to take

command of the Army of the North at Châlons, made his Queen, Marie de Médicis, Regent over the land; and she begged that she, never having been crowned, should be crowned before he went. Henry stayed his plans to gratify her, in an evil moment for France and for himself, as some strange premonition of impending disaster seemed to have half-revealed to him; for, from the moment he hesitated, he was seized with a sombre presentiment that he would never leave Paris alive. The day after the coronation, going to pay a visit to Sully, his great minister, who lay ill, Henry, before departing to take command of the army, seated in his coach, escorted by his gentlemen on horse, was stopped in a narrow road, and the fanatic Ravaillac, leaping on to the wheel of the carriage, stabbed the King to death. The terrible and slow death of Ravaillac at the hands of the infuriated people made poor amends for the disastrous blow the wretched man's knife had dealt to France in the death of this great sovereign, whose generous, active, and noble qualities had raised France to power, and cast into shadow his personal follies and vices.

Now it so chanced that in this same year of 1610 that Henry of Navarre fell to the assassin's knife, there was born at Troyes in Champagne a child, PIERRE MIGNARD, to be known in the world of art in after years as Mignard "Le Romain," so called to avoid confusion with his elder brother, Nicolas Mignard, known as Mignard of Avignon, who was also to become an artist, if of lesser fame.

The boy Pierre Mignard was marked down for the practice of medicine, but upset the plans for a medical career by showing such marked gifts for art that his father, with a sigh, turned

from the dream of a settled career for his lad, and sent the twelve-year-old boy instead for a twelvemonth into the studio of one Boucher, a painter at Bourges, whose art, whatever it was, is forgot in the blaze of that very different and mightier genius of the same name who was to glitter upon France as "the Glory of Paris" a hundred years afterwards. The thirteen-year-old Mignard is next found studying the art treasures at Fontainebleau, whence drifting back to youthful endeavour in his native town of Troyes, he chanced to be one of several engaged for the decoration of the chapel in the Château at Coubert-en-Brie, belonging to the Marshal de Vitry; and, as good luck would have it, the Marshal, handsome fellow, struck by the youngster's astounding promise, sent him to Paris forthwith to the studio of Vouet. So the lad found himself in the nursery of French art of his day. For French art there was; in which the national genius was beginning to utter itself again, though steeped in the Flemish tradition, and not lacking in Italianisation through Rubens and Van Dyck.

By this Marshal de Vitry hangs a tale. The little King Louis the Thirteenth, being but eight at the death of Henry the Great, slain by Ravaillac, the weak Queen-mother, Marie de Médicis, became Regent, and was soon ruled by favourites, particularly by the Florentine adventurer Concini, whom she created Marquis d'Ancre, and by his sister. The policy of Henry of Navarre was at once reversed — the great minister Sully promptly retired from the helm of the State. At twelve the King was declared a man; at the meeting of the States-General at which the boy King assumed governance, was one Armand Duplessis de Richelieu,

Bishop of Luçon. The futile bickerings of the deputies caused their dissolution in 1615. They were not to be called together again until 1789, close on a couple of hundred years afterwards, when they met to create the French Revolution. The King's marriage with Anne of Austria, under the Médicis influence, roused the people to rebellion under the Prince Condé — and the name of Condé became thenceforth a name with which to conjure in France. Condé seemed to have everything within his grasp when there stepped forth one who was to save the Queen-mother's party — Richelieu. However, Louis at sixteen, urged to it by his favourite, the young De Luynes, seized power, and was soon involved in the infamous assassination of his mother's favourite, the Marquis d'Ancre, by De Luynes' party in the courtyard of the Louvre, where one De Vitry, captain of the guard, called upon d'Ancre to surrender his sword; d'Ancre drew, instead, and was forthwith shot by the guard — Louis appearing at the window and thanking the assassins. The Queen-mother was at once banished, and Richelieu sent back to his bishopric. The ambition and greed of De Luynes being greater than his gifts of statesmanship, the great nobles soon gathered round the Queen-mother in discontent; when De Luynes, realising his own incapacity, persuaded Louis to make terms with Marie de Médicis — Richelieu was entrusted with the negotiations, and Richelieu thenceforth was marked for power. A general amnesty opened the prison doors to Condé, who had been flung into the Bastille.

Thenceforth Richelieu steadily advanced to power. The betrayal of the Huguenots by the King, the failure in war and the death of De Luynes, saw the Condé at rivalry with the Queen-mother

and her minister Richelieu for control of the King's will. Richelieu procured the cardinal's hat in 1622. By 1624 the distracting councils of the King were at an end — Richelieu had to be summoned to power. And Richelieu was fixed on destroying the Huguenots, on reducing the factious power of the nobles, and on strengthening the Crown. France had found her master at last.

Richelieu took up Henry of Navarre's policy of enmity to Austria, entering into alliance with the Northern Protestant powers to do so, and arranging the marriage of the Prince of Wales with Henrietta Maria, sister to Louis XIII., in 1625. At once France began to win her wars. The Pope, who had rashly interfered with Richelieu on behalf of Austria, got a sharp rebuke from the Cardinal, and Richelieu struck at the rebel Huguenots and at the great nobles. He bought the base Gaston of Anjou, brother and heir to King Louis XIII., with the gift of the Duchy of Orleans, to betray the noble conspirators who had planned Richelieu's assassination. In person, Richelieu took the field against the Huguenots, proved himself a born soldier, defeated Buckingham and the English again and again before La Rochelle, and captured the Huguenot stronghold. He was equally successful against the great French nobles. He sullied his career in 1632 with the judicial murder of the great and chivalrous Marshal Duke of Montmorency; but he taught France that he was master.

Such was the France into the capital of which young Mignard had come at De Vitry's cost — to Vouet's studio. Vouet seems to have had the seeing eye; and a few years later backed his prophetic soul by offering the young fellow Mignard his daughter in marriage, which, most unchivalrously, our Pierre Mignard

evaded, having an eye the rather upon the student's ambition of going to Italy. For Rome he made in 1635, being twenty-five, careless of the struggles of Richelieu to keep the reins of power in his crafty fingers, assailed now by the weaknesses of the King, by the bitter enmity of Anne of Austria, the King's Queen, by the hatred of the Queen-mother Marie de Médicis, who was now hostile to him, and by the nobles of France.

At Rome our Pierre Mignard found his studio-comrade Du Fresnoy, and thenceforth lived in that life-long happy friendship that was to be between the two men. For twenty-two years Mignard remained in Italy, hence his nickname of "Le Romain," though he went awhile to Venice also. At Rome he slowly won to a large reputation. Portraiture early took up all his time, the number of his sitters rapidly increasing — three Popes in turn sat to him.

Meanwhile, affairs in France moved apace. Turenne came to the front as a great commander in 1640, under the famous Count Harcourt, of the ducal House of Lorraine. Richelieu's lucky star aided his craft and skill — the Count de Soissons gained a victory over the royal troops at Sedan, only to be killed by a pistol-shot at the close of the day as he was giving orders for the pursuit of the broken Royalists. The dangerous intrigues of the Marquis of Cinq-Mars were only countered by desperate efforts on the part of the Cardinal, now in failing health — and by desperate means. Just as he had brought France to a leading position in Europe — had brought the House of Austria to utter humiliation, his political enemies defeated on every side — Richelieu returned to Paris to die, on the fourth of December in 1642,

with the sublime confession in answer to his priest as to whether he forgave his enemies, that he had never had any except those of the State. Six months afterwards, the King, Louis XIII., followed his great minister to the grave. The child Louis the Fourteenth ascended to the throne of France.

Mignard was in Rome, painting portraits, and had married the daughter of an architect — she whose handsome face is the face of the Madonna in several altarpieces painted by him, hence the name of "Mignardes" given to such Madonna-pieces of his — when the new King stepped to the throne of France. Mignard's marriage was, though he knew it not, on the eve of his leaving Italy; for, in the following year of 1657, he received the royal command of Louis the Fourteenth that called him back to France.

On his homeward journey — he had left his wife and children in Rome — he was stricken down by a dangerous illness, and stayed some months with his elder brother at Avignon, he who is known as Mignard d'Avignon, and there he met and became intimate with the witty dramatist Molière. To Paris he was soon again making his way, arriving to settle down with his old friend Du Fresnoy, and to enter into that wide and distinguished vogue and large career which make his fame as a portrait-painter, the limner of his age — painting the King and all the Royal House; and, above all, winning immortality as the painter of the Court Beauties.

Mignard came back to a France, to a Paris, strangely different from the Paris he had left twenty-two years gone by. A new King reigned over the land — to prove as lax in love as the other

had been pure in his relations with women — as masterful as the other had been weak and indeterminate and hesitant — as much a man of action as the other had been a dreamer. Young King Splendid ruled over France. The age of the Grand Monarque was being created, an age of pompous splendour for France. He had come to the throne a child. The Queen-mother, Anne of Austria, had at once swept aside the Council of Regency and assumed full power, with Cardinal Mazarin, Richelieu's apt pupil, as her minister — the choice of this pupil of her enemy Richelieu spoke well for her insight and her self-discipline. Her confidence was well requited. She needed a strong support. The nobles and Huguenots made their bid for power — and, except for Mazarin, the brain of the nation was against the Crown. The young Duke of Enghien, chivalrous eldest son of the Condé, whose greatness the prescience of Richelieu had foreseen — indeed the Cardinal married him to his niece, the beautiful and noble Claire Clémence de Maillé — came to the front, and was soon the idol of the nation; and indeed he cut a fine figure — he was to be the able, the "Great Condé," maker of victories. Five days after Louis the Thirteenth died, Enghien, at twenty-two, destroyed for ever the mighty tradition of the Spaniard in war at Rocroi. Victory after victory crowned his every effort. He succeeded in 1646, at twenty-five, on the death of his great father, to the principality of Condé and a magnificent fortune. Mazarin's dread of his power and influence led to his betrayal of Condé before Lerida, and Condé's consequent first great repulse. At last Mazarin's greed, misgovernment, and prodigality brought the Court foul of the nobles and the people. By 1648 had begun the mighty civil

war of the Fronde that threatened to do for France what the Commonwealth in England was doing for England. Condé took first one side, then the other. He fell foul of Turenne. The young King, the Queen-mother, and Mazarin had to go into retreat. But internecine warfare brought the triumphs and promise of the Fronde toppling to the ground — the rebellion of the aristocracy and magistracy on behalf of the people to control the Crown failed. Mazarin returned in triumph to Paris in 1653. Henceforth Louis the Fourteenth ruled France for sixty years as an absolute monarch, without pretence of a constitution.

A year after Mignard was summoned to Paris by the King, Dunkirk fell to Turenne and the allies; Condé withdrew — yet a year afterwards Condé was restored to all his honours, his sentence of death and outlawry annulled. Still a year later the King married a Spanish Infanta on the Isle of Pheasants — Velazquez, as we have seen, arranging the pageantry, to be stricken down with that illness that led to death, in the year that Charles the Second came to rule over us. The Isle of Pheasants also saw Death beckon Mazarin. He broke down, and died early the following year, leaving four of his nieces married to powerful lords — one to the Prince Conti. At the death of the Cardinal, Louis the Fourteenth took the reins of government into his own hands, and burst upon France in splendour.

The art of France leaped to portray the splendour of King Sun; it formed a style attune to the mock-heroic spirit of the age; and in nothing does the new French style that rapidly came into vogue display its essentially French vision, revealed through the Flemish genius enhanced by the polished spectacles of Italy, and

declare itself more markedly than in the portrait of the little Princess at Versailles painted by Mignard — the handsome little daughter of Louis the Fourteenth, *Françoise Marie de Bourbon*, blowing bubbles, her small spaniel — if indeed spaniel we can call the "towser-dog" — yapping at her side, and her macaw at her feet.

Thus it was, in a Paris ablaze with glory, that our Mignard henceforth wrought his art. Not content with portraiture, he was soon embarked upon many decorative works at the palaces of St. Cloud, Versailles, and elsewhere; and, feeling now secure of his fame and position at Court and in the world of fashion, he sent to Italy for his wife and children.

The rivalries of Mignard and Le Brun, are they not a part of the history of this magnificent age of the Splendours? Mignard's jealousy, so deep and black that he refused Academic rank in that Royal Academy that Mazarin had created, rather than take the seat of Immortality, or a Fortieth part of Immortality, that made him sit below his rival; even joining the rival Academy of St. Luc, and leading it to the faction-fights between the two!

King Sun's minister Colbert dead, and Louvois in power, Mignard could strut it as the successful rival at last; and at Le Brun's death he deigned to accept academic honours, as indeed he well might, considering that the whole of such honours were flung upon him at a single sitting. But he came to this success already supreme — he could look about him and discover no rival; and, until his death, Mignard remained supreme in French art. He was at work upon the design for a large decoration for the dome of the Invalides when the great Reaper took him in 1695.

He died just too early to behold the new art that was being born in France with the coming of Watteau, wherein grace and elegance were to usurp the mock-heroic; the coming of which new art of elegance is sounded in Belle's charming portrait of the young *Marie Anne de Bourbon-Conty, Duchesse de Bourbon*, the eldest daughter of Louis de Bourbon, Prince de Conti, the dainty girl who, born in 1689, was to die at thirty-one in that year that the Scotsman Law brought so many great houses in France to ruin.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

WHICH HAS TO DO WITH THE SMUGGLING OR OTHERWISE OF A MAN-CHILD INTO THE PALACE OF ST. JAMES'S

IN the fateful year of 1688 that James the Second of England was to flee from the throne of his people — fleeing before the son of his sister Mary and that son's wife, his own daughter Mary by his first consort, Anne Hyde — there was born to his second consort, Mary of Modena, a son, James Francis Edward Stuart, who was to be known to history as "the Old Pretender."

The birth of this little Prince of Wales, in St. James's Palace, to the dour King James II., decided the whole country, Tory and Whig, fearful of his being brought up a Catholic, to invite William of Orange and his Queen to the throne of England. Indeed, the news of the birth of the little Prince of Wales was received with loud laughter throughout the land — he had obviously been smuggled into St. James's Palace — it was all a part of King James's knavery — so the tongues wagged.

James had been gradually increasing the army, and was at Hounslow with the troops, when news came of the Acquittal of the Bishops. As he rode from camp he heard a great shout

behind him. "What is that?" asked the King. "Nothing," came the reply—"only the soldiers are glad that the Bishops are acquitted!" "Do you call that nothing?" growled the King; and fell a-brooding, his long sallow face scowling amidst the dark love-locks—for he had packed the bench of judges. That shout told him that the army he had gathered to awe the people was with the people.

Whilst the obstinate King and the determined nation stood sullenly at duel, James called to England a French artist to paint his portrait and that of his second Queen, Mary of Modena, and of the infant Prince of Wales, whether smuggled or unsmuggled. This painter, Largillière, now thirty-two, painted all the three; he came to a London not wholly strange to him—it was his third visit, and the Frenchman knew the old city well.

Born in Paris in 1656, NICOLAS DE LARGILLIÈRE had been taken to Antwerp at three by his parents, his father having settled in the Flemish city as a merchant. At nine Largillière had been taken to England for a few months (some twenty), and on his return to Antwerp had been apprenticed to the artist Antoine Goubeau, for whom he was early painting the still-life details in his pictures. It was in Charles the Second's mid-reign in 1675, when the notorious Frenchwoman Louise de Querouaïlle, sent as the spy of France to seduce the Merry Monarch, was supreme in the favour of the gadding fancy of Charles as the Duchess of Portsmouth, that the young French painter Largillière had again set foot in London town to seek his fortune at nineteen. Under Sir Peter Lely he had been employed in the Royal Palaces, thereby coming to the notice of Charles the Second,

whose portrait he had painted; and his four years' stay in London had seen him thereafter painting many of the English nobility. Thence, with growing reputation, he had gone back to Paris at twenty-three, where he had at once obtained a wide vogue amongst the rich burgess folk and the professional classes. Fortune had there sent him the friendship of Van der Meulen, also of Le Brun, the all-powerful in French art, who proved himself a staunch and loyal and warm-hearted ally.

At thirty, in 1686, a year after Charles the Second died with a genial jest on his lips in England, Largillière in Paris had been received into the French Academy in its highest grade as "historical painter" — no doubt largely owing to the friendship of Le Brun. Two years later he had come to England, as we have seen, at the call of James the Second, in time to paint the King and his Queen and infant son on the eve of their flight to France. The throne of England was soon to know James no more; for, scarcely had Largillière returned to France than, on the 23rd of December, King James embarked on his exile. He made thereafter his futile attempts to regain the crown; he but sacrificed good Irish blood in vain endeavour against Dutch William.

Louis XIV. had solemnly sworn to recognise William the Third as King of England and to defend his claim as such at the Peace of Ryswick; but, as James lay dying at St. Germain, Louis entered his bedroom and, regardless of his oath and covenant, promised the dying man to acknowledge his son as King of England at his death. It was not the least treacherous of King Louis's many treacheries; and it was to cost the Highlanders of Scotland a terrible blood-letting.

Beautiful Children

When King James the Second of England died in 1701, his son James Francis Edward Stuart was a child of but thirteen. Largillière had painted him in 1695, at a more tender age, standing beside his sister, Princess Louisa (Louisa Maria Theresa Stuart), in that canvas of *Prince James Stuart and his sister Princess Louisa as Children*, bequeathed to the National Portrait Gallery by Lord Orford — the little Prince being seven and Louisa but three, though they be absurdly tricked out and dressed as grown-ups, James in a red dress of a man of fashion, cocked hat under arm, and the Garter on his left knee; the little Louisa in the elaborate gown of a lady of quality.

James and his little sister Louisa seem to have shown early taste for the drama, for we find the pious Mary of Modena so troubled in conscience about it that she consulted a priest as to letting her children see the plays of Molière! But not all the King's horses nor all the King's men could keep the young Prince from the tragi-farce of the years. The lad was born into times too rough for him.

Meanwhile, he who painted the handsome young fellow in boyhood, Nicolas Largillière (the "French Van Dyck," as they called him, as though it were not more worthy just to be himself) was coming into wider and ever wider vogue. He was famed in his day for his historical paintings; but, fortunately for his fame, his vogue as a portrait-painter was great; and though he never courted Royal favour, nor played the courtier to attract aristocratic sitters, his distinction of style and the dignity and splendour of his art drew the great to his studio. After the deaths of Le Brun and of Mignard, he held the foremost rank in the French

school, filling in turn all the high offices of the Academy. Amongst his many charming portraits of children is the queenly little *Infanta Anna Victoria*, though there is too little of the child, too much of the woman before her time, in this small daughter of the house of Spain, who afterwards married the King of Portugal. She died in 1700.

At the death of James the Second, the little fellow of thirteen became "James the Third" to the Jacobites; but he was to be better known to his French and Italian adherents as "the Chevalier de St. George," and to become still better known to the people of England and to history as "the Old Pretender." The country had jeered at his being the real son of the King; but Largillière has written his pedigree with no doubting hand, the boy's Stuart features must rid the most virulent anti-Jacobite of any such comfort. The two children of Largillière's portrait, alone of James the Second's children by Mary of Modena, survived infancy; and little Louisa was only to reach to twenty to die in 1712, a couple of years before her half-sister Queen Anne of England went to her grave. But the lad grew up to prove not only that he was like his father in features; but like him in lack of reason, as well as infected with selfish disregard for the welfare of his people. By the time he was twenty-seven, at his half-sister Queen Anne's death, he had decided on the mad attempt to raise the Highlanders, who alone, by 1715, showed any sign of active support of his cause in Britain. The Highlanders were ever ready to come out against the House of Argyll; but their leader, the Earl of Mar, was of very different metal to the ruthless if fascinating "Bonnie Dundee," or to Montrose. Mar

was a laggard in war. The rising of "the fifteen" saw the clans scattered, lacking a great leader in Mar, and finding an even lesser leader in James the Pretender when he arrived, too late for the affair of Sheriffmuir. James got him back to France; the little band of Jacobites getting cooped up in Preston and surrendering ignominiously.

The year 1715, that brought such disaster to "the Old Pretender," brought also to France the death of Louis XIV.; and with him went the Pretender's hopes. The Regent Orleans had soon made alliance with England, accepting the Hanoverian king and being guaranteed in return the Orleans succession to the crown of France in case of the sickly lad, Louis the Fifteenth, not living, or dying without issue.

The Pretender married, in 1719, Maria Clementina Sobieski, granddaughter of the King of Poland, who bore him two sons, Charles Edward Stuart, a year after the marriage, 1720, and Henry Benedict Stuart, five years afterwards, 1725. The elder boy Charles Edward, to be known to fame as "the Young Pretender," distressed his artistic father by showing scant taste for the Latinities — he ran to an active life rather than to student habits or the love of art and letters that distinguished most of his royal house. James Murray, Earl of Dunbar, and Thomas Sheridan, whom "the Old Pretender" set over the lad as his tutors, found the boy a handful. Dunbar writes of "Bonnie Prince Charlie" at fourteen that "it is impossible to get him to apply to any study as he ought to do, or indeed in any tollerable degree, by which means the Latin goes ill" — and Dunbar loved the lad.

The younger boy, Henry, was to carry on the literary tradition of the house of Stuart; and we find, even as a child, the Old Pretender approving his studious habits, writing his disapproval to the elder boy Charles: "When you read your brother's letter, make a short meditation upon his being four years younger than you."

Largillière painted Bonnie Prince Charlie as a boy, as you may see in his canvas of *Prince Charles Edward Louis Philip Casimir Stuart,* that hangs at the National Portrait Gallery; as also he painted the younger brother, *Prince Henry Benedict Maria Clemens Stuart, Cardinal York*, to be seen in the same Gallery — the young fellow was created Duke of York, and was to become better known as "Cardinal York."

"Bonnie Prince Charlie," though weak in the Latinities, had all the fascination of the Stuarts — that charm that was to cause such endless loss to Scotland. We must take the unctuous praise of the child by courtiers with much courtier salt; but the youth seems to have shown courage and a generous temper. He had the gift of goodfellowship. Strong, active of body, debonair, at fourteen he went through his baptism of fire at the siege of Gaeta, and won golden opinions. Given such gifts of charm as were his, a prince is sure of wide idolatry; and Bonnie Prince Charlie was to drink of idolatry to the full.

The fall of Walpole, and England's estrangement with France that followed it, soon proved that astute minister's wisdom of policy in his alliance with France. The defeat of the English by Marshal Saxe at Fontenoy, in 1745, at once raised the hopes of the Stuarts, wholly though they misunderstood the temper of the

changed land that they hoped to master. Charles Edward boldly landed in Scotland with but seven followers; the Highland clans rallied to him; and he entered Edinburgh in triumph, proclaiming his father as "James the Eighth" at the Town Cross. With his Highlanders, on the 21st of September, he crushed the English force under Cope at Preston Pans. But the Lowlands remained sullenly aloof. With his Highlanders he pushed boldly for London, reaching Derby in December — only to realise that all hope was at an end. England refused to rise, even in the course of his march through the districts where the Jacobites were strongest. He fell back to Scotland; struck once more with success at Falkirk, to be crushed at Culloden, escaping to France, though a large reward was set upon his head, wandering from place to place in hiding for years, forbidden a home in any country except the Papal States — to which he would not go — his charm and fascination ever finding him willing protectors and concealers.

The Old Pretender died at Rome in 1766; and the Young Pretender, thereupon throwing off all disguise, took up his residence in Rome, and assumed the title of "Count of Albany" instead of Prince of Wales. In 1772 he married the Princess Louise of Stolberg-Goedern, who survived him. He died at Frascati in 1788, a broken man.

Henry Benedict, whatever he may have lacked of the charm of his brother, was vowed to scholarship; he entered the Church of Rome, losing thereby his hold upon the Jacobites, and was created Cardinal in 1747, at twenty-two, and Bishop of Frascati and Ostia, the year after the old painter Largillière, who had painted the portrait of him in boyhood, had been laid in his

grave, stricken down by paralysis on the 20th of March 1746. The Cardinal Duke of York was soon to be Archbishop of Corinth and Bishop of Tusculum. On the death of Bonnie Prince Charlie in 1788, Henry caused a medal to be struck as Henry IX., King of England; but, losing his church revenues on the French occupation of Rome, he accepted a pension from the British Government! So quaint is the irony of history. Returning to Rome in 1801, he died at the Sacred College in 1807, an old man of eighty-two.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

WHICH SHOWS WORTHY FOLK BEING CHEATED BY A ROGUE

THE pageant that Velazquez arranged upon the Isle of Pheasants was not only to be a sad affair for Velazquez and for Mazarin — the bride herself, the Spanish Infanta Maria Theresa, was to part from her gloomy father in order to go to twenty-three years of marriage (from that year that our Merry Monarch came to rule over us) that were to put many an humiliation upon her. King Sun was given to much loving. During his earlier years of sovereignty, he had cast his eyes upon the unfortunate Louise de la Vallière, who, the mother of two of his children, entered a convent in 1674, a heartbroken woman. The beautiful Marchioness of Montespan usurped her place, becoming the mother of eight of Louis' children, who were all declared legitimate, and married into the noblest families of France. The Montespan, into her stately life, in which she was openly set above the Queen, brought as governess, to teach her children, a lady who was the granddaughter of the famous historian d'Aubigné, and widow of the comic poet Scarron. In visiting his mistress, the King became enamoured of her governess; and soon Fran-

çoise d'Aubigné was herself mistress of the King's will. She held that supremacy over the King until death took him; and, as Madame de Maintenon, she governed France for over thirty years. The Queen, wearied of the humiliating part she played in the affections of her pious lord, died in 1683; and in the following year the King was secretly married to the Maintenon by the keeper of his conscience, his confessor La Chaise — in the presence of the Archbishop of Paris!

Now it so chanced that there came to Paris in 1681, two years before the Queen died, and whilst the pious Maintenon was fighting the Montespan for the favour of the pious King's love, a youth of twenty-two, to study art at the Royal Academy, who little thought that he would ever enter the chaste palace of the King. HYACINTHE FRANÇOIS HONORÉ MATHIAS PIERRE-LE-MARTYR ANDRÉ JEAN RIGAUD-Y-ROY — though his names were longer than his purse — had been born at Perpignon on the 20th of the July of 1659; and, losing his artist father at eight (his grandfather also had been an artist), had been brought up by his greatly beloved mother with his eyes on the art career; and she had sent the boy at fourteen to study for four years at Montpellier under the local painters; whence he went to Lyons; thence to Paris, to the Academy schools, in 1681. Here, a year after he came to Paris, he won the first prize with his *Cain Building the City of Enoch*, and attracted the notice of Mignard's great rival, Le Brun, who strongly urged him to keep to portraiture and abandon all thought of the Italian tour. Rigaud, of the many Christian names, took the astute advice, and improved his style by close study of the work of the great Flemish master Van

Dyck. He came to a dignity of performance and acquired a grandness of manner that fits in splendid fashion the age of the Grand Monarque which he was to immortalise. At first his sitters were of the burgess class; but about 1687 he was received into the Academy, and began to be sought after by fashion, when the brother of the King sat to him.

Rigaud had been ambitious to enter the Academy in its highest grade, as "historical painter," and he sent as his reception-piece in 1687 a picture of *The Nativity;* but that body would only elect him as a portrait-painter — he had to wait until 1700, when at the height of his vogue, and in the foremost rank of his art in France, before he was raised to the upper grade of historical painter of that Academy of which he was to be Professor in 1702 and Rector in 1733. Honours poured in upon him. He was ennobled in 1709.

Rigaud had a large practice and a great vogue, that were equalled by his industry. He painted thirty to forty portraits a year; and they were elaborate affairs in the grand manner — more, he painted his every canvas throughout, refusing the assistance of pupils as destroying the value of a man's achievement.

Both Largillière and Rigaud were essentially painters of the age of Louis the Great; yet they both lived to see that fashion entirely disappear, and a new art come into France wholly different from it. When Louis the Great died in 1715, his system, his grandeur, and his splendour were in ruins. The year 1704 saw the doors close on the last Salon of the years of Louis the Fourteenth, owing to the bankrupt state of the old King's treasury — Rigaud having a place of honour thereat with his Royal portraits.

Those doors did not open again for thirty-three years, when Louis the Fifteenth, unborn when they were shut, was King over the land. Rigaud hobbled through the Salon of 1737, an old man, and blinked at the change that had come over French art. He stood bewildered at the new style, wherein grace and elegance had taken the place of pomp and ceremony and the mock-heroics.

He painted the Grand Monarque's great-grandson, *Louis XV. as a Child*, on his coming to the lordship over France — indeed, with all the emblems of kinship, as he sits upon the mighty throne of a great people, the five-year-old boy is not sufficiently a child. The grand manner of Louis Quatorze is still over it all; and the mock-heroic is not absent even in the presence of the charming boy. The echo of the herald's voice cannot have long ceased in the handsome little fellow's ears, when that worthy, creeping to the little King's window with black plume in hat, had whispered, "The King is dead," and, reappearing immediately thereafter with white plumes in hat, had cried aloud, "Long Live the King!" The sickly little fellow was to see the profligate Duke of Orleans the Regent over France awhile; but in all too little a while he himself was to be King in fact — to enter upon that sovereignty over a new and blithe France that shook off the pompous Mock-Heroic Pose of which the land was weary at the burying of the old King — to enter upon that long lease of lordship over France that he was to make into one vast folly, an orgy of superstitious dread of death alternating with wild debauches — years in which the handsome boy was to degrade his splendid heritage and bring dishonour after dishonour upon its ancient state, leading the nobility of France to that mad reck-

less dance that had to be purged in the blood of his royal son and in the noble blood of her ancient aristocracy.

The profligate Regent Orleans, amongst his other wild-cat schemes to bolster up the credit of France, encouraged the mad gamble in paper-money, and the traffic in wealth across the Atlantic invented by a blackguardly gambler, the Scotsman Law — that had its madness also in England in the Great South Sea Bubble. The crash came to France about 1720; and in that crash many who had been rich found themselves poor. Artists not less than others. Rigaud, then a man of sixty, lost his all; and had to ask for, and got, a pension in his old age. But his art, though gone out of fashion, served him to the end. He died in Paris, after sixty-two years of prosperity, in 1743, an old man of eighty-four. He had painted five Kings, all the Princes of the Blood, and nearly every man of distinction of his age. He gave to them all that stately atmosphere of the grand manner that was the pose of the age; and his canvases hold a dignity that compels respect.

Three years after he went to his grave, Nicolas Largillière, three years older than he, followed him.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

WHICH HAS TO DO WITH THE PRINCELINGS OF THE AGE OF ELEGANCE

WE have seen that the profligate Duke of Orleans seized the Regency. This Philip, Duke of Orleans, who became Regent to Louis XV., was the son of Louis the Fourteenth's brother Philip, Duke of Orleans, therefore nephew to King Sun. But Orleans' dreams of succeeding to the sickly child's inheritance of France were soon dispelled by the marriage of Louis XV. to Marie Leczinska of Poland, and the birth of a son, Louis of France, Dauphin, and six daughters — this Louis, Dauphin, married to Marie Josèphe de Saxe, though he was not to succeed Louis XV., became father of the Louis who afterwards reigned as the unfortunate Louis XVI. with Marie Antoinette as his Queen.

Louis the Fifteenth, the "Well-Beloved," then, came to rule over the changed France that the Regent had led into the ways of elegance and jollity out of the pomposity and mock-heroic age of Louis the Great. And to this age of charm and elegance were born a number of French artists who made the age famous with the art of the *Fêtes galantes* and *Fêtes champêtres* that the

short-lived WATTEAU brought into the new century on the death of King Sun. Born in 1684, the consumptive Watteau uttered his superb genius during the last six or seven years of his life, dying at thirty-seven, in the year 1721.

There was born in Paris in 1685, a year after Watteau first saw the light, to a brilliant portrait-painter named Jean Marc Nattier, generally called Marc Nattier, a boy-child, whom his father christened after himself, JEAN MARC NATTIER, who was to paint the celebrities of the age of Louis the Fifteenth in splendid fashion. Nor should Jean Marc Nattier be confused with his elder brother Jean Baptiste Nattier, a distinguished "historical" painter, who unfortunately, after his reception into the Academy in 1712, became entangled in the disgraceful scandal which sent him to the Bastille, where he took his own life in 1726.

Jean Marc Nattier the Younger (and the Great) was the son not only of a distinguished portrait-painter of the same name, but of an artist mother, Marie Courtois, a famous miniaturist. Young Nattier, taught by his father, went to the Academy schools and studied in the gallery of the Luxembourg, where his hand made the drawings from the Marie de Médicis pictures by Rubens for the engravers to work upon. The young fellow early shaped towards portrait-painting, in which he was soon to become famous. In 1716, the year after Louis the Great died, he went at thirty-one to Amsterdam with the minister of Peter the Great — whom he painted, the Czar being then there, as well as several of the leaders of the Russian Court. A couple of years afterwards he was elected to the Royal Academy of France.

The fortune that his skill had rapidly begun to create for him he lost, like old Rigaud, in the great commercial speculations that had sent France financially mad about the time that England was engaged in the South Sea Bubble. Thenceforth for forty-six years Nattier devoted himself wholly to portraits, creating that long series of masterpieces that make illustrious the art of portraiture in the elegant years of Louis the Fifteenth. And not the least part of his fame rests upon his charming portraits of children, particularly of the Royal House and of the French aristocracy.

He painted Louis XV.'s grandson, the Dauphin, *Louis of France*, Duc de Bourgogne, in a girlish dress as a child at Versailles, that indeed we might easily mistake for the portrait of a girl, were it not for the ribbon of the Order of the Holy Spirit that hangs from his shoulder — that Louis Dauphin who was the eldest son of the Dauphin, Louis XV.'s eldest son and of Marie Josèphe de Saxe. He died in childhood, leaving the throne to his as yet unborn brother who was also called Louis, and destined to reign as the ill-fated Louis XVI.

Nattier also painted thus early in his career the portrait that hangs at the Prado of *A Prince of France*, as may be judged by the fashion of the handsome lad's hair.

The wild money-gamble started by Law had made many rich who had aforetime been poor; many poor also who had aforetime been rich — the rise to power and wealth of the great burgess class of France, the farmers-general, had increased the desire of these newly rich to vie with the old nobility in the splendour of their houses. The demand for works of art painted by the

artists of the new Elegance, together with the wide extravagance of the age, brought forward a group of brilliant artists in the style created by Watteau. And most of them painted the Child with consummate taste. BOUCHER, the painter of pastorals, Venus-pieces, and *fêtes galantes*, born in 1703, was soon lord of art — he painted infants as France had never before seen them painted. His portrait of Egalité Orleans as a child is one of the master-pieces of child portraiture. GREUZE also was soon painting children, particularly young girls, with astounding charm, if not free from sentimentality and affectation — his *Broken Pitcher* at the Louvre is also amongst the far-famed child-pictures. CHARDIN, again, one of the master-painters of France, of the world, painted children more than once with force, and with a truth strange to the age. But Nattier was the portrait-painter of the reign; and he caught the subtle grace, the aristocratic charm, and the beauty of the children of the great with wondrous skill, and fixed these things upon the painted canvas in portraits after portraits that are a part of the immortal record of his age. With what skill and sense of style he painted that canvas of the *Princess Marie Isabelle*, granddaughter of Louis the Fifteenth! and that of *Madame Louise, daughter of Louis XV., as a Child!* that hang at Versailles to-day, wherein we find the children tricked out in all the elaborate gowning of the grown women of the elegant and dandified years. Madame Louise was one of the neglected daughters of Louis the Well-Beloved, whom the King was wont to call by the pet-names of "Rag," "Snip," "Pig," "Tatters" — royal young women who had a difficult part to play in the bitter strife between the King on the one side and the neglected Queen and

their brother the Dauphin on the other — a constant warfare in which both sides stooped to tricks and intrigues worthy of kitchen wenches.

Nattier died in Paris in 1766, eight years before his Royal master — two years after the Pompadour went to her grave.

Nattier's mantle fell upon Drouais. FRANÇOIS HUBERT DROUAIS, who had been born in Paris in 1727, was the son of Hubert Drouais (1699 to 1767), a portrait-painter before him; and under his brilliant father, as Nattier had done, he learnt the mysteries of his art, becoming thereafter pupil to Nonotte, then to Carle van Loo, then to Natoire, and eventually to Boucher. Received into the Academy in 1758, upon his portraits of the sculptors Coustou and Bouchardon, which at once brought him to the notice of the Court, he painted thereafter the whole of the Royal Family, and was soon limning the celebrities and beauties of the age.

At the Louvre may be seen his child-portrait of the Comte d'Artois, brother to the ill-fated Louis XVI. — the Comte d'Artois was afterwards King Charles X. of France when Napoleon and the French Revolution had passed away. He also painted D'Artois's sister, *Madame Clotilde*, who was afterwards Queen of Sardinia.

The portrait-group of the *Two Children with a Goat*, by Drouais, gives one of his best-known child-pieces. Here we have the young Comte d'Artois and his sister Clotilde. This boy grew up to be that Comte d'Artois who did as much as any man of his time to bring the Royal House of France into contempt. He was soon to be the hero of the wonderful breeches, so tight that tall lackeys had to drop him into them

and force their fitting; he it was who built Bagatelle in six weeks at vast cost, in order that he should fulfil his lightly given promise that his sister-in-law Marie Antoinette should have her *déjeûner* thereat, on her return with the Court from her summer residence in the country. He it was who, with his brother afterwards Louis XVIII., fleeing the country at the fall of the Bastille, thereby was largely responsible in bringing his brother Louis Seize and the unfortunate Marie Antoinette to the guillotine. And, in the after years, when Napoleon was overthrown and the Bourbon again came into his own, it was D'Artois's evil advice that led Louis XVIII. into his most serious blunders. When he himself succeeded to the crown as Charles X., his blundering and aggressive government soon led to his abdication, and to that sullen exile in which he passed his later years.

Drouais died in Paris in 1775, a year after Louis XV.

Drouais had a son, Jean Germain Drouais, born in 1763, who gave very great promise of surpassing his father and grandfather in achievement; but going to Rome in 1785 with his master, the artist David, after making sensation after sensation with works sent to Paris, the amiable and brilliant young fellow got fever, and died in Rome in 1788.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

IN WHICH WE SEE THE CHILD IN FRENCH ART UNDER THE SHADOW OF THE REVOLUTION

IT seems a curious paradox that Religion largely failed to paint the Child, whilst the eighteenth century, the so-called century of doubt, was rich in child-painting. But Religion is a strange word. The truth must be bluntly recognised that the fierce religious attitude of men's minds pushed aside interest in the reality of childhood — it so dominated the mind as to cause a harsh tyranny over the freedom of the little ones. Thus it comes that in the much-abused eighteenth century — that superb century in the history of mankind — the Child at last began to come into its own. Men set Liberty upon the altar of their faith, and the Child also had the shackles struck from its feet. Art began to look at the childhood of a child, and awoke and blinked in glad surprise to find that the glory of a child lay in that it was a child, not an adult.

The profligate years of Louis Quinze in France therefore revealed the Child seen true, where the Italians were often unable to see a child at all. What could be more significant of the splendour of art than this: that in the years of Louis the Well-

Beloved (too often rather than too greatly beloved) art saw the real Child, whilst even the sentiment of the very philosophers who were bent on overthrowing the ancient state of affairs could not grasp the meaning of childhood! that even Diderot could attack Boucher because his infants were just infants, and not picking hemp, or steeped in literature, or reorganising the world! that philosophy was as bent on making philosophers of infancy as the art of the churches had been bent on making prophets of children!

As the years of Louis XV. ran out, the new philosophy gripped the people, from end to end of France. The symbol of that new philosophy of the rights of man was naturally the ancient republican ideal of Greece and Rome. It was driven to every extreme — and art took on the bad as well as the good. The Dresden shepherds and shepherdesses that walked life airily as though to a gavotte — patched, powdered and painted, gowned in elaborate brocades and silks and satins, bejewelled, and leading lambs with silken ribbons through Boucher's real French landscapes — gave way to heroes amidst ruins in landscapes of which nature in France knew nothing.

Of the men of genius born in this time of change was Fragonard, beloved pupil of kindly old Boucher. Fragonard had come from the South, from Grasse, high up in the mountains of Provence by the sea, where he had been born to a glove-maker of the little town in 1732; had come to Paris, to Boucher's training, who had first sent him for a time to Chardin; and his genius had given itself up to the painting of the *Fêtes galantes* of the vogue for awhile. But in Fragonard was a stern strain of

honest burgess blood that turned towards more serious art; and his early marriage with a girl of Grasse, who had come to Paris to learn to paint under him, brought children to his home, which thenceforth became his studio. Here he painted masterpieces after masterpieces, that bridge the gulf between the elegant makers of Louis Fifteenth art and the sterner art of the French Revolutionary days close at hand; and in none was he happier than in his great scenes of the portrayal of children and motherhood and the home, rid of all religious cant — therefore the more deeply religious. His *The Schoolmistress* is in the Wallace Collection, holding not only the charm of infancy, but a large decorative quality bred of his splendid training in the great *Fêtes galantes* schooling of his earlier art. In this same collection is the exquisite little portrait of *The Fair-haired Child*, a harmony in white, pale yellow, and silvery greys, which displays all the fine poetic qualities of his handling of paint and his mastery of colour. It is said to be his own small son.

When Fragonard, at thirty-seven, married the eighteen-year-old Marie Anne Gérard, who bore him his much-loved daughter Rosalie, and, ten years afterwards, in 1780, a son, Alexandre Evariste Fragonard, there came to live with the newly-married couple his wife's younger sister Marguerite and her brother Henri. Fragonard's love for his sister-in-law was to cause ugly scandal.

Louis XV. dead, and the Du Barry flown, Louis XVI. and his Queen Marie Antoinette came to rule over France. The royal young couple came to a troublous heritage, for which they had none of the great gifts of state-craft needed for the leading of the newly awakening France to her mighty destiny. A stronger man

was to be born for her leadership in that mighty wayfaring. The Revolt of the English Colonies in America set fire to France. The black storm of the French Revolution came up over the horizon, and burst over the unhappy House of Bourbon. The ageing Fragonard had a powerful friend in the artist and regicide David. But the Terror made no man's life safe in Paris — the guillotine that took the King and Queen took also Madame Roland and Danton and Fabre d'Eglantine and Desmoulins and Robespierre himself. Fragonard got packing to his native Grasse until Napoleon seized the helm of affairs, and led France to glory and splendour out of the chaos, when Fragonard went back to Paris an old man, bewildered by the new art, but beloved by all, as he had ever been.

Leading for some years a not unhappy life, the old man one day, returning from a walk on a sultry day in August, entered a café, ate an ice, and congestion of the old brain set in. He died on the morning of the 22nd of August 1806, the year after the famous French woman-painter, Madame Vigée le Brun, came to settle in Paris after her long and splendid exile — she who painted her own girl so often in portraits with herself, and whose skill of hand made immortal the celebrities of the Court of Louis Seize and Marie Antoinette, and, not least of all, the little princelings of the doomed Royal House.

The new art, of which David, Boucher's pupil, was the front and leading personality, brought forth amongst others a young fellow, FRANÇOIS PASCAL SIMON GÉRARD, who was to have a wide vogue at the Court of Napoleon, and who chiefly interests to-day in his portrait of a Child. He painted the son of the great

Napoleon, the little *Roi de Rome*, who, as the Prince Imperial, was so like in features to his world-famed father. François Charles Joseph Napoleon was the offspring of Napoleon's marriage with Marie Louise of Austria, being born in 1811.

The little fellow was four years old when Napoleon, defeated at Waterloo, handing over to Soult the task of rallying the shattered army, hurried back to Paris, arriving at four in the morning of the 21st of June, himself bearing the first authentic news of the disaster. Finding the Chambers determined on his abdication, he drew up his famous Declaration to the French people, in which with great dignity he abdicates his power: "My political life is ended; I proclaim my son, under the title of Napoleon II., Emperor of the French." The act of abdication was by Fouché set before the Assembly, who voted an answer of respectful thanks to Napoleon, but evaded any acknowledgment of the new Emperor. The boy grew up, and reached to manhood but to die in his twenty-first year, eleven years after his great father was laid in his grave at St. Helena.

Gérard, born in Rome in 1770, where his father was serving in the suite of the Ambassador of France, had come to Paris in 1782, where, after eighteen months' study, he had become pupil to the sculptor Pajou, then to Brenet, then to David in 1786, on the edge of the Revolution — and David thenceforth wholly influenced his style. He escaped being drawn into the fierce conflict of the Revolution, not without difficulty, devoting himself solely and wholly to art, producing much illustration for publishers of books. At last he began to make his mark as a portrait-painter, and came to paint Napoleon, Talleyrand, Louis XVIII.,

the Emperor of Russia, the King of Prussia, King Charles X. of France, Louis Philippe, and the leading celebrities of his days. He was an original member of the Legion of Honour; and in 1819 was created a Baron. His later years saw his house the resort of the great and of the world of fashion. He died in Paris on the eleventh of the January of 1837—the year that Queen Victoria came to rule over us—and with him died the last of the followers of David. His "historical pictures" are dead; but his portraits, being of the great of a great age, keep his memory green.

France has produced since then her mighty school of painters of the Barbizon; and her influence has been the supreme art influence of our day—and in that influence she has shown and shows no truer instinct than in her many and varied pictures of children.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

WHICH PROVES THAT THOUGH THE INDUSTRIOUS APPRENTICE BE KICKED OFF HIS MASTER'S DOORSTEP, HE MAY ALIGHT ON HIS FEET

IT is difficult to understand the belittling of the eighteenth century. It shines like a lamp across the years. It is difficult to understand how a German, far less an Englishman, and last of all an American, can set aside the fierce sincerities and humane splendours of the eighteenth century, with a shrug of the shoulders, as being "artificial." As for France, she arose therein to the supreme height of her splendid career. Maybe 't was the wig that deceived the superficial — indeed, is it not the superficial who are deceived by wigs? 'T is true that language wore brocade, and folk walked with the dandified strut through the picturesque years, showing a trim leg, and taking snuff with monstrous swaggerings; the right conduct of the clouded cane no doubt took time for schooling that had better been more usefully employed on deeper culture; they stepped it with bigod airiness; nay, did they not even set bejewelled buckles on their very shoes? Therefore the century was not sincere! The century of Washington and Franklin, of the mighty Chatham, of Burke and Samuel Johnson, of Nelson and Clive

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and Wolfe, of Danton and of Voltaire, must not be allowed sincere, or perish modern sincerity! Yet, sincere or not sincere, artificial or profound, this is the century that is distinguished, above all other centuries whatsoever, for its fine achievement in the limning upon the painted canvas of the fascination and charm of childhood, and of the gracious and wondrous dignity and charm of motherhood; which surely are in their very essence a sincerity — if sincerity be in any degree thinkable!

The year 1723 rang out the old, rang in the new, for Art in England. It was the year that Kneller died; and with him passed away the sway of the brilliant alien painters who had made their homes in London — Zucchero, Van Dyck, Lely, Kneller, and the rest. It was the year that JOSHUA REYNOLDS was born, who was to establish the English school in the general esteem, raise it to wide recognition amongst his own people and throughout Europe, and build it a place in the public State.

Reynolds was a seventh child; and Fortune hovered ever within his reach. He had the sanity and calm judgment to grasp the hem of her garment as she flitted by: indeed, he was possessed of the sanities in full measure — he was a born diplomat, a skilled ambassador in the broadening of his own dominion, and of the dominion of English art, which he loved and served so well.

'T is true, Hogarth was before him, born in 1697, whilst Dutch William still ruled over the land, and dying in 1764, four years after George the Third, Farmer George, came to the English throne; but Hogarth painted few children, and was not greatly interested in the significance and charm of childhood.

Reynolds was born of Devon, cradle still of sea-heroes in Joshua's day — indeed he was to paint more than one. At Plympton it was that he first saw the light; and in the kindly atmosphere of an easy-going parson's house, and under his desk and ferule, he grew to youth — for his father, parson Samuel Reynolds, was headmaster of Plympton Grammar-School, whither he had gone from Oxford, a Fellow of Balliol, to the marrying of sweet but dowerless Theophila Potter, and, as payment for the living of his romance, to the schooling of lads in the Latinities and elements of civilization. The boy's mother, Theophila — called Offy by her affectionate lord — grandmother of that little Offy who was later to become the sitter to our Joshua's earliest pictures of children — was a gentlewoman, bred in the atmosphere of the vicarage.

The child Joshua was born into a gentleman's home, and the culture of a race of parsons was over it. His father's father had been a parson before him; and his mother was a parson's daughter, as well as her mother before her; whilst two other brothers of parson Samuel Reynolds were of the clergy. The schoolmaster-parson was as kindly a father as husband.

But there is one little branch in the family tree that we would do well not to pass by, without knocking off some of the buds to put into the posy of Joshua's blossoming — little Joshua had, on his father's side, a Dutch grandmother. It brought to the lad an inspiration and an essence that were to transmute all he was to touch with his skilled fingers into gold. His art is steeped in the Dutch genius, spite of the dandified though threadbare cloak of Italian cut wherein he posed not a little pompously in the

after-years. That drop of Dutch blood was to win him to splendid colour and forthright handling and to superb portraiture. It is true that in the years to come he will pour out handsome *Discourses* on Art; and that in them he will belittle the Dutch achievement, laud the Italian. But Joshua was a sly fellow, and not above crafty ways: he was above all things diplomat — "complying and bland" of a surety he was. And the vogue was to glorify Raphael as lord of art; therefore he so glorified him. But his honesty could not wholly brook the domination — he could not wholly crook his back — and Michelangelo's name rings out like trumpet-blast through all; stultifies the Raphael parrot-cry; and becomes his vaunt at last. Yet, even so, 't was not the whole truth. At the back of his diplomatic soul, behind the tact that was to win him to companionship with the mightiest spirits of his age — and see him even walking with the King at Hampton Court — the King who bore him no love, but had to honour him — 't was all a shrewd dissimulation. He took from the Dutch all that he could take without open need to declare the pilfering — for he keeps his secrets to himself, does Joshua — and, whilst he shrewdly puts it into no ink that shall be printed, he allows in the confidence of an unguarded moment that Velazquez painted the "finest portrait in the world"! Oh Joshua! who talked so glibly and so splendidly of the Grand Manner, but wasted few pots of paint on the Italian idolatries, creating the portrait instead; and who was thus and in wide fashion so wholly Dutch! — being content in the significance of motherhood and childhood as such. His enemies did dub him crafty — indeed he was nothing less — and uglier names most unfitting — but crafty he was, and not

least in that he kept his source of inspiration close shut within those cautious diplomatic lips.

But he who can read the real significance of Art cannot be deceived. Joshua forgot that. Nay, it may be said, and at once, that most that was artificial and weak and untrue in his skill of hand and eye was of this Italy of which he raved; all that was best came from the Holland that was in his blood, in so far as it was not wholly native and forthright English — and Devon English.

In the after years when, at the height of fame, he took pupils, it is significant that his tutelage was wholly different from the vast generosity of a Rembrandt. It is a part of a deed of apprenticeship that the master shall teach the apprentice the "mysteries" of his craft; but Joshua's pupils worked in rooms apart, and he so far sullied his bond that from them he kept with jealous care the secrets of his mastery. Was such a man likely to blazon forth to a gaping world these mysteries? He filled their ears with magnificent talk of the great Italians, and straightway flung the godlike folk out of his windows; nor shall you find the art of Michelangelo or Raphael in his great achievement. It was enough to wear the head of Michelangelo upon his seal. But you must look with the seeing eye at the art he wrought upon the canvas if you will hold communion with the real Reynolds.

Dutch he was, in so far as he was anything but English, from the nursery. As a child, it was from poring over the prints in Jacob Cat's *Book of Emblems* (a Dutch book of his Dutch grandmother's) that he was first fired to become a painter.

Little Joshua grew up to youth in a home wherein affection and genial kindliness reigned. A studious child, early learning to read, he was well steeped in the somewhat heavy literature for a boy that was within reach of an eighteenth-century lad. Well for him that the parsonage thus yielded early converse with such authors as he read, and that he lived under the table-talk of the once-Fellow of Balliol; for he was early to go forth a-bread-winning for himself and the children of the Fellow of Balliol; and his vast industry in his art and his wide social habits must have left him few hours for education in the after years from the day he set out on his wayfaring. Like most artistic children, he showed precocious signs of his bent; and he was not baulked by unwilling parents. He was essaying oils by twelve — his earliest effort in portraiture being upon an old piece of sail-cloth for canvas, and with shipwright's paint and brush, with which he struck off, in a boathouse, from a sly sketch made in church, a quite passable portrait of Parson Smart, the tutor to young Dick Edgcumbe, a playfellow of Joshua's, and son of the important house nearby the small Joshua's more modest house.

Thus it came about that worthy parson Samuel Reynolds cast aside his original intention of making an apothecary of the youth; and the young fellow in his eighteenth year, on an October day of 1740, took the coach for distant London, apprenticed to the fashionable portrait-painter Hudson, a mediocre artist enough, for the somewhat heavy sum of £120, which must have been a severe drain on the parson's resources, even though the lad's eldest sister Mary, Mrs. Palmer, paid a half of it — a debt that Joshua Reynolds never forgot, and repaid an hundredfold, as his

handsome treatment of Mary's daughters and granddaughter was afterwards to prove. Thus to Hudson's household in Great Queen Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, the youth went — one of his fellow pupils being the down-at-heels youth John Astley.

With Hudson, the young Joshua, learning the mysteries of his craft, and keenly interested in his art, was happy as the day was long; until suddenly, a couple of years being flown by, the 'prentice seems to have stirred the jealousy of "the most admired portrait-painter of the day" over a too masterly painting of one of the servants of Hudson's household; for Hudson, making the young fellow's tardiness in delivering a picture for a few hours owing to a heavy downfall of rain his excuse for sudden unkindness, dismissed the astounded and bewildered Joshua on the spot with his historic "You have not obeyed my orders, and shall not stay in my house." Luckily the youth could take refuge with an uncle in town. Back to Devonshire, to his dismayed family, he went, ruffled in feelings but eager to be at work. However, he was "much employed in portraits"; and was soon back in London again, and in the good graces of Hudson, who perhaps recognised the legal obligations of his bond to be civil, though the young fellow was no longer under his roof. Not for long was London to see him this second time; he was called back to Plympton in 1746 by the serious illness of his father, who passed away on the Christmas Day of that year, leaving Joshua at twenty-three to make a home for three years at Plymouth Dock with his two unmarried sisters, Elizabeth and Frances, to begin his career in grim reality. Here he now came under the better artistic influence of Gandy of Exeter, painting several portraits

during the next three years, and making his first success with the gallant sailor, Captain Hamilton, father of the Marquis of Abercorn. Concerning Reynolds's speaking of Gandy's portraits as being the equal of Rembrandt's, we shall never know his full sincerity; but whether it were Gandy who led Joshua's Dutch blood to pilfer from Rembrandt's store or not, Rembrandt revealed to him much that was best in his art. He also painted the Eliots, the Edgcumbes, the notorious Miss Chudleigh, the Bullers, the Bastards, the Parkers, the Molesworths, and other notabilities during these Plymouth days; and was clearly moving amongst the society of the big houses in the county. To these years belong his canvas of the *Boy Reading* (one of the earliest of those portraits of children that were at no distant date to lead him to fame in this realm of portraiture) and his first large family group of the Eliots, in which Captain Hamilton carries one of the children pick-a-back.

It was in the spring of 1749, in his twenty-sixth year, that, at the house of Lord Edgcumbe, he met Keppel, who already at twenty-four had begun to make a mark as a sea-commander; and who, raised to the rank of Commodore (afterwards Viscount Keppel), was about to take command in the Mediterranean. The two men became close friends; and Keppel's offer of a passage to take Reynolds out to Italy brought the joyful Reynolds's ambition to do the Italian tour within his reach — his sisters Mary and Elizabeth advancing him the money for the venture.

So it came that Reynolds saw Minorca, paying his way with the painting of the portraits of the eminent men he met; and, unfortunately, getting a bad fall from a horse which caused the

cutting away of a part of his lip, that disfigured him somewhat for life — though he treats the unpleasant business airily enough, the disfigurement drawing from him the grim remark, "my lips are spoiled for kissing" in a letter to his flame, Miss Weston — so far as he ever had a flame, even in calf-love. Thence to Rome for two years went Joshua, where he contracted the chill that made him deaf to the end of his days. But he was eagerly studying the old masters; and his serene temper uttered no complaint or whine.

In Rome, as always, he sought for and extended his acquaintance amongst the great.

Of the English artists then studying at Rome was the brilliant out-at-elbows Irishman, Astley, his old studio-comrade at Hudson's, of which Astley the story is told that, being with the others at a picnic near Rome, and the day fiercely hot, all shed their coats — Astley only after long hesitations — when it was found that the needy young fellow had sewn as back into his waistcoat one of his canvases, on which was painted a mighty waterfall.

Turning homewards in 1752, on the edge of his thirtieth year, Reynolds, after staying a month in Paris, came back to England, arriving on an October day in London, rich in experience of the arts, but at a heavy price — the fall from the horse in Minorca had disfigured a face already marred by the small-pox of his childhood; it had seriously damaged not only his lip but his utterance; he also came to the making of his career deaf for life. But his serene temper and sunny disposition shone out; he bore his infirmities with blithe heart, wholly unsoured. A three months'

stay in his beloved Devon recruited his shattered health — then, early in 1753, to lodgings in St. Martin's Lane, at No. 104, he went; and flung himself with untiring and eager enthusiasm into his career, taking his sister Frances Reynolds to keep house for him.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

WHEREIN GENIUS WEDS A MYSTERIOUS BEAUTY AND FINDS A PATRON IN A HOAX

AS Joshua Reynolds, in his thirtieth year, with his sister Frances, took the coach that carried him from Devonshire with his household gods to try his fortune in London town, there was a young fellow of twenty-six plying the paint-brush in Suffolk in this same year of 1753, who was destined to share the glory of the other, and to stand in rivalry with him.

Born in the May of 1727, the year that George the Second came to the throne, therefore four years younger than Reynolds, THOMAS GAINSBOROUGH, youngest child of nine, first saw the light in a tradesman's home at Sudbury — the father, a thrifty man, who made his way as milliner and clothier, but whose chief source of revenue was from the making of shrouds for the dead, the worthy man not being above a little honest smuggling also. Sudbury, planted with weavers by Edward III., was famed, when the child Gainsborough came into the world, for its crapes and the making of shrouds for the dead; and the father held well nigh a monopoly in the shrouds. But he was no ghoul — an upright trades-

man of kindly ways, and a good master. The mother, a Burroughs, had "a genteel talent" — a nice taste for the painting of flowers in a ladylike and not too artistic fashion.

The lad, Thomas Gainsborough, went to the grammar-school of the town, his mother's brother, the Reverend Humphrey Burroughs, being the master; but Gainsborough did not glitter in learning, though of a quick wit and drinking in knowledge as by instinct from childhood until the grave took him, his pen and pencil busy the while wheresoever he could find virgin paper whereon to sketch. By ten he had marked skill with the pencil; at twelve he had set his heart on being a painter, and was using brushes and oil-paints. He left school at fourteen. He showed a precocious instinct for landscape and pastorals; and was happiest when painting from nature — a holiday for the lad ever meant the woods by Sudbury and his paints and canvas with him. It is tradition that, his father refusing to give him a letter asking for a day from school, the promising lad forged one — and so well that the schoolmaster uncle was deceived; and the crime coming to light, the father, aghast, cried out: "Tom will be hanged!" — the which, indeed, he was to be — at the Royal Academy — or at least hung.

The father saw that art it must be for his son; so, at fourteen, the lad was packed off on the coach to London to board with a silversmith, who sent him to Gravelot, the engraver; and Gravelot generously got the boy into the St. Martin's Lane Academy. Soon thereafter he was a pupil in the studio of Hayman the historical painter, whose fame the rather rests to-day on gossip of his rollicking debaucheries.

Gainsborough came into a London studio when art was at its lowest state in England; and Nature had already taught the lad more than he was likely to learn from Hayman's studio-built dramas. But English art was being born; Hogarth and Wilson were creating it — though Hogarth was given the cold shoulder and Wilson was not valued at his worth — as, indeed, he is not even yet valued. By sixteen, Gainsborough was already showing the grace and distinction that were to be his in full measure.

The loose-living Hayman's only influence upon the youth was to lead the lad to the sowing of wild oats, and to a more than crude taste in the Convivial. A letter written in the after-years of manhood, by Gainsborough, to a young actor, who had come up to London, proves that he had not been over wise: "Don't run about London streets . . . . It was my first school, and deeply read in petticoats I am; therefore you may allow me to caution you."

Three years of apprenticeship saw him, at seventeen, start artist on his own account at lodgings in Hatton Gardens, working for dealers, and painting landscapes and portraits at three to five guineas. With the clay also he was busy. However, he found small demand for his work, and after a twelvemonth of defeat he left London for his native town in Suffolk, where the handsome, bright, intelligent youth was warmly welcomed and was soon making friends. Modest and charming as he always was, he came to Suffolk with a certain reputation for talent. Up with the lark, he was painting landscapes until setting of the sun; forming his style on the Dutch painters, but with an added delicacy and style all his own.

He met at nineteen the beautiful girl, sister to a commercial traveller employed by his father, Margaret Burr, whose beauty was the talk of the country-side; and she, eager to have a picture of herself, sat to Gainsborough, and ended the sittings as the bride of the young painter. So, at nineteen, Gainsborough was married to the eighteen-year-old beauty, entering thus early on that happy family life that knew few shadows. It was a fortunate affair for the young fellow; the bride brought him £200 a year—a mysterious income, paid regularly through a bank in London, by the unknown father; indeed, so closely was the secret kept that even Gainsborough's children never knew who was their mother's father. Mrs. Gainsborough once said to a niece in later years, to justify a splendid gown she was wearing, that she had some right to it, "for, you know, my love, I am a prince's daughter." Her likeness to the Duke of Bedford was very marked. Gossip varied between an exiled Stuart and the Duke of Bedford—the fair Margaret evidently favoured the Stuart; her tongue betrayed the Stuart, her beautiful features the Duke of Bedford. At any rate, her little dowry rid Gainsborough from all stultifying cares of bread; and freed him from the daily toil for existence. A sweet-natured and level-tempered woman, Mrs. Gainsborough brought a valuable thrift into the life of her hasty, hot-tempered, genial, free-handed mate, to whom she was a tender and true comrade; and the artist never knew any but the happiest of homes—for all his convivial habits, he was never happier than by his own hearth.

So, in 1745, a married man at nineteen, Gainsborough took a small house in Sudbury for a few months, painting woodland

pieces; six months thereafter the young pair moved to Ipswich, where were rich merchants, only to find orders slow in coming. But he met and became friendly with Kirby, the writer upon art; a friendship only torn apart by the Kirbys leaving for London in that year of 1753 that saw Joshua Reynolds and his sister Frances take the coach also to settle in London town.

Amongst the earliest friends that Gainsborough made in Ipswich was a strange one who was to have a far wider effect on his career. Philip Thicknesse, a soldier, had been appointed Governor of Landguard Fort shortly after Gainsborough came to Ipswich. He was a quarrelsome, huffy, busybody of a man, who had fought a duel almost as soon as he got the King's commission — and all his life long was in hot water with his superior officers. But he had a real affection for Gainsborough, and realised his genius. During a walk with a friend in that friend's garden, Thicknesse had grown troubled by a sad-faced countryfellow who stood leaning over the wall with folded arms; at last, calling his friend's attention to the man, he received the answer that the fellow had been there all day, and that he must be a madman. Thicknesse, on going to the man, saw that it was a painting on a board — Gainsborough's portrait of Tom Peartree, that still exists. Thicknesse was so struck by the painted hoax that he ferreted out the artist, and thenceforth took him under his tyrannous patronage. Mixing with the gentry of the neighbourhood, Thicknesse brought sitters to Gainsborough's studio, and orders for sketches of country-houses began to pour in. The artist was soon a welcome guest in many of the houses of the great.

Beautiful Children

A passionate love of music drew Gainsborough at the same time into a musical club at Ipswich, for which he painted a portrait-group of its members by candle-light. Here he seems to have lived the convivial life, not without horse-play, for there are traditions of his wig being snatched from his head and thrown about the room.

CHAPTER TWENTY

IN WHICH A LOCK OF A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN'S HAIR IS DISCOVERED IN A DEAD MAN'S POCKET-BOOK

JOSHUA REYNOLDS, as a lad, had been fired by the writings of Richardson, who, though a mediocre painter, had an enthusiastic belief in the coming of a great British School of Painting. Richardson sounded the trumpet-call for dignity and high aims; he counselled the rejection of the foreign domination in English art; and demanded a national utterance. His ardent belief in the near rise and outburst of the English achievement had roused Hogarth to action — it now roused Reynolds. It set before Reynolds the ambition to take rank beside the highest achievement of the masters of other illustrious peoples. It begot the eager wish to see the masterpieces of the world; and, having seen all that he could, his hunger being appeased, he set to work with deliberate intention to rival it. He knew the immensity of the task he had set himself; but he doggedly determined to let nothing interfere with it.

Reynolds came to London town at thirty, eager for distinction, eager for work, full of hope founded on the promises of powerful friends, with high aims and filled with enthusiasm — his style

fully formed after careful study in Italy — and with that deliberate calculation that marked all he did, individual in his art, individual in his personality, and disciplined by a rare sagacity and common sense, he girded his loins for conquest.

Taking lodgings, then, at 104 St. Martin's Lane — the Lane then beloved of artists, who did there mostly abide; hard by the same was Slaughter's Coffee-House, which drew the literary folk thereto — Reynolds, with his sister Frances for housekeeper, began his great career as painter of portraits. From the first he never lacked sitters; and the world of fashion came eagerly to his famous "painting-chair." Sitters indeed came so fast that, before the year was out, Reynolds had to take a house at No. 5 Great Newport Street, and raised his fees. There he lived seven busy and most prosperous years, painting during these years of the Seventeen-fifties from a hundred and twenty to a hundred and fifty portraits each twelvemonth. No man painted fewer failures. He was soon making six thousand pounds a year. Early to rise, he broke his fast at nine; was in his painting-room by ten, when the clock brought his first sitter. He painted until four — dressed in the habit of fashion — and gave the evening to good-fellowship.

Beautiful women such as Mrs. Bonfoy; gallant sailors such as Anson (the "Old Dreadnought" of his tars) and Haldane of West Indian triumphs, and Boscawen who dreaded nothing; statesmen, soldiers, poets, lawyers, artists — he was soon painting them all. In the portraying of beautiful women, Reynolds had ever an eighteenth-century itch to "idealise" — and he got through the powder and the paint astounding well — but it was part of the droll comedy of an occasional lack of the sense of humour that

he painted the Duchess of Manchester and her child as the virgin goddess *Diana disarming Cupid,* whilst he painted the maiden lady Miss Morris as *Hope nursing Love* — two of his five contributions to the first display of the Royal Academy! The actress Miss Morris, who thus sat for Hope nursing Love, was the daughter of Governour Morris, and had just begun her stage-career. The following year she had "stage-fright," fainted on the boards, was carried out, never again to appear before the footlights, and died the year afterwards.

Reynolds was to immortalise the features of Samuel Johnson, Goldsmith, Burke, Walpole, Sheridan, Colman, Gibbon, and Boswell. Johnson was to be the first. They met the year after Reynolds settled in London, and took to each other. It was to be an intimate friendship between the two men — strangely different as they were in character — a friendship that knew no slightest shadow. Johnson early brought into the painter's life the young Irish barrister Burke. And Garrick soon afterwards drifted into his studio, and thence into his "painting-chair."

But amidst the celebrities of the town he was already beginning that painting of youngsters which was to bring him so much fame. In 1758 he painted *Master Mudge,* son of his old friend in Devon, the learned Dr. Mudge; and in the following year he placed upon the canvas the same boy in fancy character as the *Young Hannibal.* He was soon to be producing these child-portraits in ever-increasing numbers, of which were the *Master Hare* at the Louvre, and the beautiful portrait of *A Boy* at Glasgow.

The last year of the Seventeen-fifties saw seated in Reynolds's

painting-chair for the first time Horace Walpole's niece, the lovely Lady Waldegrave, whom he was to paint again and again. It has been gossiped that the Countess was Reynolds's only love; whether the secret of it was kept close-sealed within his cautious lips even from her, we shall never know; but there was found in the pocket of one of his note-books, long years after he had passed away, a carefully treasured lock of her golden-brown hair, concealed in a piece of paper, on which his hand had written "Lady Waldegrave." He painted later a charming portrait of her clasping her child in her arms as Cupid — later again he limned her as a widow — and still later again as Duchess of Gloucester.

Reynolds was a sociable fellow; and he found his liking for society of vast usefulness in pushing him on in the world. He dined out much; and entertained much himself. He liked well a game of cards; and though he was a canny gambler, he enjoyed his little gamble; and most of the gambling clubs knew him. He lived the gay bachelor, in a temperate way; was much at balls and routs; loved the theatre; but was ever a soul of moderation — except in the taking of snuff.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

WHEREIN GENIUS LEARNS THE ART OF SHOOTING THE MOON TO BE A PART OF HIS APPRENTICESHIP

IN the year 1753 that Joshua Reynolds at thirty settled in London, far away north there was a cabinet-maker of Lancaster, one Wright by name, had a friendly chat with an old carpenter and small farmer, with a passable gift for architecture, who hailed from Dalton-in-Furness, of the name of Rumney. Cabinet-maker Wright told old Rumney that his nineteen-year-old 'prentice, George Rumney, was for ever making sketches of his fellow-workman and was likely to make a better painter than cabinet-maker, and urged the father to apprentice the young fellow to an artist. It was said in good part; for old John Rumney was well liked.

John Rumney came of Gypsy blood of the Border, and was of yeoman stock, as was his wife Anne Simpson of the Cumberland yeoman folk. The lad George under discussion was the second child of eleven; born in the December of 1734, he had ended his schooling at ten years; and from ten to the edge of manhood worked in his kindly old father's workshop, winning the friendship of a music-loving watchmaker of the little town,

one Wright, who taught him the fiddle, and perhaps some loose ideas of marriage — for the man was a bit of a scamp, had left his wife, and was living with a woman in Dalton. However, he encouraged the youth in his drawing, as also, it would seem, did the carpenter-father, since he gave his son Leonardo da Vinci's *Treatise on Painting* (over which the young fellow pored, and the engravings of which he copied), as well as a volume that held instructions on oil-painting entitled *Art's Masterpiece.*

Now, there was living at Kendal — "living" as far as he was able to live anywhere, for he was a spendthrift rogue, ever flitting from place to place, hunted by his creditors — a wandering portrait-painter, one Christopher Steele, who had learnt his art from Carle van Loo in Paris, and thereafter theatrically affected the part of a would-be fop, whence the Lancashire and Cumberland folk nicknamed him "the Count." To this amusing rogue, two years after Joshua Reynolds came to London town, the old carpenter Rumney in far-away Lancashire apprenticed his son George Rumney; and thus started upon his art's career at the age of twenty-one the shy handsome young fellow who was afterwards to change his name to Romney and come to wide fame.

It was while 'prentice to this amusing rogue Steele that George Rumney fell ill, and, in being nursed back to life by his landlady's daughter, came to love the girl — the "Count" being away at Gretna Green, marrying a young lady pupil with whom he had made a "romantic" bolt, the lady having a dowry. The gallant Steele, shy of returning to Kendal, summoned his 'prentice to York; and George Rumney, not liking to leave the girl with

his pledge unfulfilled, forthwith married Mary Abbot on the 14th of October 1756; and the ambitious young fellow of lean purse, bidding farewell to his bride, departed for York. But soon thereafter the "Count" made another of his sudden flights, leaving George Rumney to finish his portraits for him, to settle with his angry creditors, and collect his payments, before following him to Lancaster. The young fellow, now about weary of the humiliating business, and himself a creditor of the "Count" to the tune of some ten pounds out of his and his wife's meagre earnings — for the girl used to send her absent young husband a rare guinea in the wax of the seal of her letters — persuaded the gorgeous Steele to release him from his apprenticeship, on condition of his cancelling his debt, after a year of thrilling service under him. To Kendal George Rumney then went in 1757, and set up a studio; and to the eternal credit of the county folk near by, the Stricklands of Sizergh in particular, who allowed him to copy the family portraits by Lely and Rigaud, he was soon earning his bread by painting portraits of the local "quality." And here, during these five years at Kendal, were born to young George Rumney a son and daughter. To him came in 1759 his brother Peter, a lad of high promise, and for three years was taught painting by him — that poor Peter who was to take to drink and become such a curse to warm-hearted George Rumney.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

WHEREIN GENIUS GETS TO HORSE AND SALLIES FORTH TO SEEK ITS DESTINY

BY 1760, the year that George the Third came to rule over us, Reynolds found himself prosperous enough to purchase the forty-seven years' lease of, and move into, the house in Leicester Square, then known as 47 Leicester Fields, where the rest of his life was to be spent; where he came to the supreme position he was to occupy in the eyes of his countrymen, and where he forthwith set up his gaily decorated chariot, its panels painted with "the four seasons of the year in allegorical figures" — his servants liveried and laced with silver. He shrank from the splendour of the chariot — his servant getting much tipping from showing it to the inquisitive — and even sister Frances seems to have flinched from much use of it.

This year that saw Reynolds move into his house in Leicester Square was also to be an eventful one for Gainsborough in Suffolk; for he made his first move towards fortune. The fame of Reynolds came to him, and stirred him to act. At Thicknesse's suggestion he got a-packing, and made for the fashionable town of Bath, espying sitters in plenty amongst the beaux and belles who

flocked to the gaieties of the famed inland watering-place; and he there took a house of considerable importance in the Circus, much to his frugal wife's alarm. The news of his coming quickly got about; and his studio was besieged by celebrities of the day. His fee of five guineas for a head he was early able to raise; and to ask forty guineas for a half-length and a hundred for a full-length.

It was in 1760 also that the leading artists of London formed into a Society, and opened their first exhibition of pictures to the public in England.

During the Seventeen-sixties Reynolds greatly increased his reputation. They were fateful years in his career. He first exhibited his works to the public in 1760 at the Society of Arts — that Society out of which grew the Incorporated Society of Artists five years later, from which seceded the group of men who became the Royal Academy, the first exhibition of which Royal Academy was to be held in 1769. These Seventeen-sixties, then, were to be the last years of Mr. Reynolds; he was to blossom forth in 1769 as Sir Joshua, knighted on the 21st of the April of that year. However, that was not as yet.

In 1760 Reynolds painted one of the most famous and beautiful of his pictures of mothers-and-babes in his *Honourable Mrs. Bouverie and Child*. It was in the following year that Reynolds met Goldsmith in Johnson's rooms, and the friendship between the two men began which was to be so much to both.

The year 1762 saw Reynolds take Johnson down to Devonshire with him for six weeks, when Johnson astounded the natives with his huge appetite for clotted cream and honey and

cider; and it is told of him how he glittered as runner, "joyously racing with a young lady on the lawn at one of the Devonshire houses, kicking off his tight slippers high into the air as he ran, and, when he had won, leading the lady back in triumphant delight."

In far-distant Kendal in the north, the young George Rumney had been turning longing eyes to London. Gathering together some twenty little canvases of "subjects," some his own, some painted after engravings, he offered these in a lottery of half-guinea tickets. With the proceeds of their sale, and what little savings he and his young wife had scraped together — about a hundred pounds in all — not daring to take his wife and children to share in his venture, but leaving them amongst friends with a half of his little fortune, the young fellow of twenty-eight, carrying fifty pounds with him, mounted a horse on a day in March 1762, and in company with two fellow-travellers, rode out of Kendal, setting his face southwards towards London town.

During a day's halt at Manchester, the young Rumney happened upon the egregious Steele, who rode with the party to Stockport. It was the last time Rumney was to see him alive — Steele disappeared a little later over seas to the West Indies, decamping with wonted suddenness from his creditors.

So, at the end of an eight days' journeying, George Rumney, spelling his name Romney, came ambling on horseback over the cobbles of London's streets, and took lodgings at the Castle Inn, whence, after a fortnight, welcomed and aided by his old schoolfellow Greene, now an attorney in Gray's Inn, he found lodgings

wherein to practise his calling — Daniel Braithwaite of Kendal, who was now in the Post Office, introducing sitters — and other old friends proving generous and true. He flitted thence to lodgings in Dove Court, and started a large "historical painting"; flitted in the August to other lodgings in Bearbinder's Lane, where he painted a *Death of General Wolfe*, which, being sent to the competitions for prizes of the Society of Arts in the following year of 1763, won for the young artist a consolation prize of twenty-five guineas.

Anxious to see the art of the great masters of the past, he and his friend Greene were in Paris in the September of 1764, glorying for six weeks in the art-treasures of the city, the collection by Rubens at the Luxembourg being his chief delight. He came back to London to take lodgings in Gray's Inn by his friend Greene; and a considerable vogue for his portraits followed amongst the legal brotherhood.

It was to the second display of the Society of Artists in London that Gainsborough sent from Bath his first publicly exhibited portrait, and in 1763 the small Georgina Spencer, at six years of age, sat to him — she who was later to sit to him in London as Georgina, the famous Duchess of Devonshire.

In 1764 Hogarth, who had lived hard by Reynolds in Leicester Square during Joshua's first four or five years there, died. There had been little sympathy in taste or pursuits between the two men. Reynolds also very nearly died.

About the mid Seventeen-sixties, the pretty flirt and charming painter Angelica Kaufmann came into Reynolds's life and painting-

chair; she was ever in love with somebody, Reynolds amongst the number; but, though he liked her well, he loved his art better. Reynolds dreaded marriage for an artist: "You are ruined for an artist!" said he upon hearing of Flaxman's marriage. Angelica's flightiness at last led her into the ghastly farce of marriage with a valet who was playing the part of his absent master, Count Horne; and it was Reynolds who helped her to get the marriage cancelled — though he could not rid her of the humiliation of it which drove her ashamed and humiliated out of England.

But a great event was pending, for which Reynolds had schemed and planned with dogged persistency and courage — with all the more credit since he knew he was not a favourite at Court. The petty quarrels and squabbles of the Incorporated Society of Artists had roused the contempt of Reynolds. His last contribution to its displays, however, was one of those superb portraits of children that is amongst the world's masterpieces — the niece of Peg Woffington, the little *Miss Jessie Cholmondeley carrying a Dog across a Brook*, the dog hugged in her arms and hanging from them in the long-suffering acceptance of discomfort so characteristic of dogs that live with children. On the 10th of January 1768 the King formally instituted the Royal Academy; the members elected Reynolds their first President, and the King dubbed him Knight. And with his appointment as President began the series of those fifteen *Discourses on Art* delivered by Reynolds, that have passed into our literature, in spite of their many falsities.

By the time that the Royal Academy was created, Gains-

borough's reputation was so assured that his was one of the thirty-six names enrolled in its original membership. To these his Bath days belongs the *Boy at the Stile.*

It is significant of Romney's lack of position in the art-world at this time, that, though in London, his name was not of sufficient importance even to have been considered for the list that contains so many of the egregious mediocrities as stepped side by side with Reynolds and Gainsborough into "Immortality."

In 1767, Romney had been in London five years. He had, strangely enough, given no hint that he was a married man; and was looked upon by all who knew him as a bachelor. Yet in this year, being thirty-three, he travelled north to his father's home, whither, on the death of his little girl, his wife had gone to live a year after George Romney had ridden out of the dales towards London. He brought back with him to his new lodgings in that same Great Newport Street where Reynolds had lived, his gifted brother Peter; but a few months' sufferance of the idle drunken habits of the younger brother made it clear to Romney that good would come neither to his brother nor to his own career by keeping him, so back he packed the young fellow to the north — he who was to be until his early death so constant a drain on Romney's resources.

Stories are told of Reynolds's spites against Romney at this time; as a matter of fact, Romney had as yet made no great mark. He was steadily coming to the front; but his lack of judgment and a certain ill-luck caused him to send his works to the worst displays. It was in 1767, when he met the poet

Cumberland, a sound and true friend, that he first began, thanks to Cumberland, to get public recognition. He rapidly began to emerge. He was painting family portraits into which children enter; and in 1769 gave his famous *The Warren Family* to the world.

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

WHEREIN WE MAKE OUR BOW TO THE BEAUTIFUL DUCHESS OF DEVONSHIRE, AND THERE IS HINT OF A DUEL

HIS call by the general desire of his fellows to the Presidency of the Royal Academy proves the supreme position held by Reynolds in English art on the eve of the Seventeen-seventies. That unrivalled position was soon to be assailed by two men.

It was as President of the Royal Academy, as Sir Joshua, that during the Seventeen-seventies and Seventeen-eighties, Reynolds was to pour forth masterpiece after masterpiece of the portraiture of children — until blindness fell upon him.

Reynolds had been to Devonshire in 1770 for the hunting, of which he was fond; and brought back with him to his home in Leicester Square, to live with him, his little thirteen-year-old niece, "Offy" Palmer, who had lost her father. The child was very dear to the painter; and she sat much to him in the portraiture of children that he was about to paint in ever-increasing numbers. His picture of *The Children in the Wood*, and of *Miss Price* as a little shepherdess, called forth the praise of Horace Walpole. He painted also this year *The Beggar Child*, and the

young *St. John the Baptist in the Wilderness*, that hangs in the Wallace Collection.

Nor was this painting of childhood confined to Reynolds. At Bath, Gainsborough was gaining an ever-increasing power; and in this same year of 1770 he painted and sent to London to the Royal Academy one of the most famous pictures of boyhood known to us—the *Portrait of Master Buttall*, better known to fame nowadays as *The Blue Boy*. Around this celebrated picture has grown a legend that Gainsborough painted it to cast contempt upon Reynolds's dogma that the light parts of a picture should be warm in colour; that blue and such cold colours could not be employed with true artistry. But it so happens that Reynolds did not write nor deliver this address for several years afterwards; nor is *The Blue Boy* the only canvas by which Gainsborough utterly disproved Sir Joshua's contention. It remains, however, that it does upset the dogma absolutely. In fact, so far from Gainsborough having attacked Reynolds, it is strange that Reynolds, with so triumphant an achievement as the splendid and harmonious *Master Buttall* before him, should have written such dire stupidities. The boy who stands in the blue Van Dyck dress in a landscape, aristocratic and calmly looking down upon us, was Jonathan Buttall, son of a wholesale ironmonger in Greek Street, Soho, a generous patron of the artist.

Meanwhile Reynolds was painting more child-portraits: the *Cupid as a Link-Boy;* the famous *Venus Chiding Cupid for Casting Accounts;* a *Nymph and Bacchus*, in which the Bacchus is an infant; and *A Girl Reading*, in which his much-loved little niece Offy appears reading *Clarissa Harlowe!*

In 1773 he painted the golden canvas of the famed *Strawberry Girl*, now at the Wallace, in which his elfish little niece Offy is heroine — the colour is rich and glowing; and the handling very direct and beautiful, the exquisitely wrought thing being done as at a touch. Apart from Sir Joshua's love of the child, it is not difficult to understand his choice of this canvas as being one of the half-dozen original things which no man ever equals in his life-work. The influence of Rembrandt, both as to colour and touch, is most marked — it is indeed worthy to be ranked with the mighty Dutchman's masterpieces. The turbaned elfish little girl, with her basket of strawberries on her arm, is bathed in a golden atmosphere which leaves a wondrously haunting effect on the memory.

The Strawberry Girl was the beginning of that series of portraits of children thinly disguised as "Fancy Subjects" which were to win to such wide popularity, and to which Reynolds brought all his best qualities of brain and hand and heart; every year thenceforth, from his knighting, was to see children sitting to him — *Robinetta*, that child feeding a bird on her shoulder, who, in all the splendour of her golden-red hair is a possession of the nation — and the rest. And it is significant of Reynolds's limitation in imagination that the nearer the pictured child is to portraiture and the further it is from "fancy," the nobler and truer it is; and the nearer the masterpiece.

The *Lady Melbourne and Child* is of the early Seventies. Reynolds was now painting superbly, complete lord of his art. The year of his painting the winsome elfish Offy as *The Strawberry Girl* is memorable as having seen Reynolds at the first

night of his friend Goldsmith's comedy, *She Stoops to Conquer.* Amongst other pictures of these months was the very fine *Mrs. Hartley as a Nymph with her boy as an Infant Bacchus.* The beautiful actress carries her laughing, merry, naked infant boy on her shoulder; as may be seen at the National Gallery. She it was whose beauty in the Georgian Seventies was the talk of London town. And this masterpiece of her and her boy calls forth our homage to-day, as it caused Horace Walpole to burst into praise of its charm. She was the cause of a duel when sitting to Reynolds; but Reynolds's sitters were themselves constantly embroiled in duels.

Perhaps the most celebrated of all Reynolds's pictures of mother-and-children is the *Lady Cockburn and her Children* of this year, in which appears Sir Joshua's macaw, with which Johnson was on such elephantine good terms — the picture was engraved as *Cornelia and her Children.* Sir Joshua himself regarded this canvas as one of his masterpieces, for he did the picture the honour that he afterwards put upon the famous *Mrs. Siddons as the Tragic Muse* — he signed his name on the edge of the lady's draperies. The lovely and amiable Mrs. Parker was also painted this year with her two-year-old boy. And the portraits of children include the *Master Cox as Hannibal,* the *Master Parker,* the *Master Cockburn,* and the beautiful little eight-year-old boy *Master Edgcumbe.*

The following year of 1774 his friend Goldsmith died — it was when he was painting the once Countess of Waldegrave, whose lock of hair lay treasured in Reynolds's pocket-book — she who was now become the Duchess of Gloucester — and he painted

also her bonnie little baby daughter, *The Princess Sophia of Gloucester*, lying on the ground hugging her long-suffering dog. The famous beauty, the Duchess of Devonshire, sat to Reynolds at this time — (she who, as a child, stands with her mother's arms about her in the fine portrait belonging to Lord Spencer, known as *Georgina Countess of Spencer, and Daughter — the Lady Georgina Spencer, afterwards Duchess of Devonshire*, a portrait of whom, as a child, also hangs at the National Portrait Gallery. The little Lady Georgina Spencer, from the day she became Duchess of Devonshire, was the leader of society. Her charm and her fascination brought brightness and cheerfulness wherever she went. Generous and noble by nature, she drew from Horace Walpole the superb tribute to her "lively modesty, and modest familiarity" — surely the finest definition of an aristocratic woman that could well be penned. She died at an early age in 1803.

The lordly Houses of Spencer and Crewe stand out throughout the eighteenth century for all that was noble and cultured in the national life — they were the worthy leaders of a society that created the mighty Chatham, and brought forth the superb artistic and literary masters of a great age. To them Reynolds and Gainsborough owed much, and they repaid it in splendid kind, immortalising the members of these great houses in superb portraiture that is not the least part of the glory of a glorious age.

Romney, with that ill-judgment that dogged the handsome shy fellow all his life long, sent his pictures to second-rate exhibitions. The year 1772 saw him display his work in public for the last

time. Yet his vogue during these early Seventies enormously increased. He was making a hundred pounds a month.

It may be said that however much he is to be excused for leaving his loyal wife in the North in his earlier days, he at least is blameworthy in not sending for her now. And, indeed, it might have been well for him had he done so, in many ways. But this is to judge a man of genius by the standards of ordinary men. Genius is, in much, just exactly that which differs from the ordinary — the man of genius sacrifices everything to the pursuit of his aim — it is a part of the tragedy of genius. The very Christ demanded the sacrifice — in religion. Art demands it, as all great creative work demands it. Romney's eyes were set already on a visit to Rome; he saw himself becoming the peer of Sir Joshua Reynolds — and he had no lack of injudicious friends who were constantly nudging him to the fact. He determined to come to the business with Reynolds's advantages of communion with the great dead, armed with Reynolds's weapons. And he foresaw that his wife's provincial ways, for all her goodness and for all his fondness for her, would be a bar to his struggle for supremacy with the bachelor in Leicester Fields. He realised that his own shyness was heavy enough weight against him already. And by the time the weapon for the fight was in his hand, another factor came into his life that was not only to overwhelm Romney, but was to conquer completely the soul and body of England's greatest Admiral. However, though on the edge of forty; with the lifelong aim of supreme achievement in his art rather than mere worldly success in its practice, that was his guiding star to which he sacrificed

all else, himself included; and though already beginning to divide the town with Reynolds — to Rome he went in 1773 for two years.

The lull in the rivalry was not to be so complete for Reynolds as it might have been. During Romney's absence there came to London town one who was to rival both men in the struggle for the bays.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

WHICH DISCOVERS GENIUS RUNNING AWAY FROM A BORE AND FALLING INTO THE ARMS OF THE KING'S MAJESTY

GAINSBOROUGH had spent some fourteen years at Bath, prosperous, happy, with ever-increasing reputation, when, in 1774, the thought of coming up to London seems to have dawned upon him. But he was easy-going; and mere money-making had small part in his ambition. The practice of his art filled his life; it gave him all the money he needed; and he was content with his life, when there came to him an unpleasantness that decided him to leave Bath.

The truth was that Thicknesse had become to him an intolerable bore. On his arrival at Bath, Thicknesse, strutting it as discoverer of Gainsborough's genius, had suggested a portrait of himself to lure sitters. Gainsborough had begun it, then put it face to the wall, finding he had no need of lures or of Thicknesse; sitters poured into his studio without lures. Meantime, he had painted a portrait of *Mrs. Thicknesse*, which he gave to the fussing husband. She eagerly desired one of her consequential lord as pendant to it. Happening to possess a very fine old

viol-di-gamba for which Gainsborough offered her a hundred guineas — he was always buying instruments he could not play — she (whether for a hundred guineas or not, we shall never discover) gave it to him on the promise that he was to give her in exchange a portrait of her husband. Gainsborough carried off the fiddle, and started upon a new portrait of Thicknesse. Whether a tale was borne to the artist by some tattler that Thicknesse had been heard to aver that he remembered Gainsborough when his two children were running about the streets of Ipswich without shoes or stockings to their feet, or not, Gainsborough again cooled off from his portrait and put it with its face to the wall. The lady grew furious; and persuaded Thicknesse to write a bitter epistle demanding the completing of the portrait or its delivery as it stood. Gainsborough, weary of the man and his wife, sent off both viol and portrait by return. The reply came hot-foot from the offended Thicknesse, with the sketch returned, to "take his brush, and first rub out the countenance of the truest and warmest friend he ever had, and so done, then blot him out for ever from his memory." The unpleasantness decided Gainsborough to be rid of Bath and his trying benefactors, the Thicknesses: with a sigh of relief, he packed his belongings, and straightway made for London in the summer of 1774.

Gossip had reached Gainsborough in that year that he first went to Bath, how Reynolds had moved into his large house in Leicester Square, and set up with a gilded coach and liveried servants. Gainsborough had realised the value of making a good appearance on arrival at Bath; he saw the even greater necessity for it on settling in London. Looking round for a large house

in the best part of the town, he took the western wing of Schomberg House in Pall Mall, paying the high rent of £300 a year for it — having for neighbour, in the other half, that John Astley of the Roman picnic and waistcoat fame, who had married a rich widow. Gainsborough had small reason to regret the risks of the big house or his move to London. His success was immediate and great.

Sir Joshua, whether he felt resentment at the rivalry or not, concealed it if he felt it, and with his habitual courtesy called upon Gainsborough. The call was not returned; and Gainsborough showed the same lack of tact and good-feeling in absenting himself from the Academy meetings and dinners, and, for several years after coming to London, sent no pictures to the annual display. Yet the admiration of each of the rivals for the art of the other was prodigious; and neither was backward in his statement of it.

The fact was that the two men differed so widely in tastes, in the choice of their companions, in their habits and ways of life, that there was little bond between them.

Gainsborough's triumphs leaped to him at his coming to town. A few months in Pall Mall, and the King commanded the artist to Buckingham Palace, where he was soon painting the King and Royal Family. The stream of fashion at once poured into Gainsborough's studio. He became a welcome visitor at the King's palace, and a great favourite with the Royal Family. It is strange to think that this man whose fame rests upon the refinement of his art, preferred the society of rollicking clowns and jesters, repelled by the brilliant wits and the literary society that were

so much to Reynolds. He was soon in such prosperous state that he set up a coach — but as soon put it down again. Gainsborough was never a man at ease in his own carriage — he preferred to call a passing hackney coach when he wanted to be driven.

A happy-hearted man, lovable, generous, and free-handed, Gainsborough's impulsive nature was his only enemy — the which is a handsome defect in any man. His quick angers were a part of his irresponsibility — his capricious and uncertain temper had in it no love of wounding, and he was eager to make up a quarrel. His hasty spleen made him descend to resentments which the bland worldliness of Reynolds blotted out far more masterfully by calm ignorings. These were but summer storms in a genial and gracious spirit, housed in that tall, fair, and handsome body. In love with life, bright, gay, uncritical of his fellows, humorous and quick of wit, he loved a life free of ugly adventures. It is of Gainsborough that the story is told that, on an old fellow called Fowler, who was sitting to him, becoming fascinated by the skull of a child that lay upon the mantelpiece, and asking what it was, Gainsborough with waggish promptness replied, "The skull of Julius Cæsar when he was a boy."

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

WHEREIN WE MAKE OUR BOW TO THE BEAUTIFUL MRS. CREWE, AND FIND THE TOWN FURIOUSLY DIVIDED

TO Reynolds's masterpieces of the middle Seventeen-seventies belongs the portrait of little *Miss Bowles*, hugging a dog, now in the Wallace Collection, and better known from the engraving as *Love Me, Love my Dog;* the portrait of little Lady Ann Fitzpatrick as *Collina* (a child-peasant on a mountain); the famed *Mrs. Sheridan as St. Cecilia*, with its singing children; and the beggar-lad and his sister, known as *The Boy with the Cabbage-Nets.*

The following year of 1776 he gave to the world the *Infant Samuel*, one of the best known and most widely reproduced of all his pictures, though by no means of his finest achievement. And it was at this time that he painted the now famous *Master Crewe as Henry VIII.*, in which the sturdy little fellow straddles in such jolly boyish fashion in mimicry of bluff King Hal, his thumb in his belt, his two spaniels at his feet. Both the boy and the artist entered into the spirit of the thing with rare delight. Of the Crewe family Reynolds painted many portraits.

John Crewe of Crewe Hall, a member of Parliament, married in this year the great beauty Frances Anne, only daughter of Fulke Greville, of the noble House of Warwick. This beautiful woman is the *Saint Genevieve Reading and Attending her Sheep* in Reynolds's great masterpiece of that name, or, as it is sometimes called, *Mrs. Frances Crewe as a Shepherdess Reading "Clarissa Harlowe."* She sat many times in Reynolds's painting-chair — she is the Hebe, with her brother Master Greville, in *Hebe and Cupid;* that picture out of which the boy's figure was cut, and its place taken by a tripod, when the angry father quarrelled with his son in after years. Mrs. Frances Crewe was one of the "women of the time." The ballooning craze caught her. She was a friend of Fanny Burney, afterwards Madame d'Arblay, who wrote of her, a full quarter of a century after she burst upon the town as one of the reigning beauties, that "she uglified everything near her." She was the heroine of the toast, at the election of C. J. Fox for Westminster, "True blue, and Mrs. Crewe!" On Mr. Crewe's being raised to the peerage in 1806, she became Lady Crewe; dying ten years afterwards.

Reynolds had painted little *Miss Crewe*, sister to the little Henry VIII. Crewe, in 1770, the well-known canvas in which the child stands in black hood, and with basket on arm. The *Master Herbert as Bacchus* was also of this year.

Within a twelvemonth of Gainsborough's coming to town, there arrived in London in the July of 1775 that other, the third genius of this age in art, fresh from Italy — he who had gone to school again at forty, in the midst of a great and successful

career, and, leaving Rome in the January of 1775, after close upon a couple of years of hard self-discipline and with a hand increasingly skilled by incessant practice, and a mind enthralled by Titian and the men of the great school of Venice, was now to win to fame — George Romney.

Romney stepped into his old quarter at Grey's Inn greatly fortified, as well as forty, with trained gifts for the achievement of his artistic career — keen and eager to try his strength. He had gone to Italy with introductions from the great; he returned the friend of many more that were great and powerful.

He had arrived in London at the end of his wanderings with scarce a penny in his pocket — indeed, what little he had was borrowed money. He had now to draw out from the bank the whole of his savings therein deposited before leaving England, in order to clear his ne'er-do-weel brother Peter from a debtor's prison. He began his new career with debt upon him for this brother's sake all in vain — Peter drank himself out of the world two years later in his thirty-fourth year.

So Romney, his connection in town two years dead, in debt, and past forty, saw that he must either go and bury himself in the country or take a big house in town, for his success depended on the whims of the folk of fashion, little concerned with a man's power, wholly influenced by the figure he cuts. He boldly took the large house and studio in Cavendish Square, left empty by the death of Cotes. To No. 32 Cavendish Square then, at the Christmas of 1775, he went; and, sitting for weeks of a dreary London winter before his empty easel, he gazed at the prospect of arrest and ruin, with sad eyes upon the two

hundred pounds squandered upon his brother Peter, of whom the only news from the North was of his eternal drinking, when — the Duke of Richmond walked in and sat to him. Thenceforth sitters poured into the studio of "the man in Cavendish Square." His industry was prodigious — he painted a hundred portraits in the year, and, unlike Reynolds, he allowed no pupil to touch an inch of his canvases.

From this time the town was divided between the two camps of the "Reynolds faction" and the "Romney faction" — yet, strange to say, Romney had, and showed, little of that sensitive jealousy towards Reynolds that Gainsborough took no pains to hide, as Romney bluntly showed when a flatterer, thinking to please him, disparaged Reynolds. "No, no," cried Romney — "he is the greatest painter that ever lived; for I see in his pictures an exquisite charm which I see in Nature, but in no other pictures."

Unfortunately, Romney's peculiar infirmity of mind — a constant dread of enemies, and an over-cautious temper, combined with the fear of the constant interruption and distraction of social life upon his working time, to which he had sacrificed wife and child — was little likely to shrink from sacrificing social intercourse.

It was in 1776, after this Christmastide when Romney entered into possession of his great house in Cavendish Square, that the well-meaning but blundering and conceited busy-body, the ill-advising poetaster Hayley, came into Romney's friendship, and began that domination over the artist's mind that was in so many ways mischievous to his sensitive soul and disastrous to his career.

Hayley it was who put into Romney's head the idea of the jealousy of Reynolds, and turned aside Romney's intention to exhibit at the Royal Academy. Romney needed small encouragement of that suspicion, which was the curse and bane of his life. It was a sad day for Romney's career and mind that he allowed Hayley to take the sane Cumberland's place in his closest friendship. In the winter of this year, Romney's son John came to town to see his father, to find him after a long day's toil, the light gone, at work upon a "fancy subject" — one of those many fancy subjects upon which the egregious prig Hayley was for ever urging the man's genius to waste itself rather than to create masterpieces of portraiture.

Painting thirteen hours a day, and, like Reynolds, a heavy Sunday worker, Romney rarely went out when the light failed, working instead upon schemes for fancy subjects that were never finished. Painting with great rapidity, with direct touch and full brush, he disdained all glazes and retouchings. The large number of Romney's unfinished works have been set down to the lax morals of the day, whereby wives passed rapidly to other loves, and beautiful mistresses lost their protectors. If so, "life" must have been rapid indeed, and loves but a week long.

Why Romney's wife did not now join him in town we shall never know. Whether the country-bred woman shrank from the position, or whether by Romney's ruling, no man can tell — and we have no right to judge. Even now, badly bitten as he had been by his brother Peter, and well-nigh ruined by him, he again drew his all from the bank — some six hundred pounds — to send his brother John to India and set him up in that honourable

career which ended in the rank of Colonel. To friends and struggling students his purse was ever open.

Reynolds was now engaged upon the portrait of the bonnie little *Daughter of the Duke of Buccleuch*, in cloak and bonnet and muff, standing in the snow with her dog; the *Little Fortune-Teller*, the little Lady Charlotte Spencer, telling the fortune of a small boy, her brother Lord Henry Spencer, in Van Dyck costume; and the small Elizabeth Beauclerk as *Una*, seated by a lion in a woody landscape. Another celebrated child-picture was that of *The Russell Family* — three boys and a girl; one of the boys, little Lord William Russell, turned restive, and vowed he would not sit to be painted; "Keep where you are, my little man," cried Sir Joshua; and painted him as he stood a-sulking, huddled up against the wall.

Gainsborough returned to the Academy in this year of 1777; whatever the breach, it was now healed.

It was the time also of Reynolds's masterpiece of *The Marlborough Family*, in which large canvas are several children, one of the most stately and dignified family groups known — and here, again, Reynolds's good temper led him to make use of a restless, fidgety child to fine purpose by painting her teasing her sister with a mask, to the no small gain of the whole arrangement.

The Boy Reading called forth Horace Walpole's praise, whatever that was worth. But the year is most memorable for his delightful and justly famous picture of *Lady Betty Delmé* with her handsome boy leaning against her, whom, with his little sister, her arm holds to her — a dog trying to claim their attention.

The death of the mighty Chatham struck all England to its heart. But the artists had small concern with politics. Into their lives the mad war with the revolted colonies came not at all.

Reynolds repeated an old success in the enchanting painting of *Mrs. Payne Galwey* with her child on her back; and scored still another with his well-known *Children of Mr. Parker* — a little girl in a mob-cap and her ten-year-old brother in a red dress. Reynolds was reaching to the very height of his powers.

The rivalry of Reynolds and Romney was now the talk of the town. Neither men lacked the service of tittle-tattlers to put them foul of each other — yet neither had personal cause for it. The egregious Hayley published his anonymous *Epistle on Painting*, which was promptly put upon Cumberland; being addressed to Romney, it openly slighted the President of the Royal Academy. It brought Romney greatly to the front. Lord Chancellor Thurlow thundered out his "All the town is divided between two factions — the Reynolds and the Romney, and I am of the Romney."

The habits of the two men were antagonistic — Reynolds, the man of the world; Romney, shy, suspicious, retiring, dreamy, of strained nerves. Romney rushed at his portraits — until the finishing touch on skirt or the like needed his hand's last embellishment — then he dawdled, until, as Cumberland neatly put it, "so many favourite ladies were dismissed, so many fond wives divorced, before he would bestow half-an-hour's pains upon their petticoats, that his unsaleable stock was immense."

He was soon in far greater demand for portraits than was Reynolds. Northcote leaves us in no doubt: "Sir Joshua was not much employed in portraits after Romney grew into fashion."

Reynolds's work on *The Nativity* for New College at Oxford, now saw him painting much from children — Mrs. Sheridan sitting for his Madonna.

Unfortunately "the gaiety of nations was eclipsed" this year by the death of his friend Garrick; and, sadly enough, Topham Beauclerk died the year following, an inconsolable loss to the great-hearted Johnson, and heavily felt by Reynolds.

The last year of the Seventeen-seventies saw a precocious boy of ten set up in Oxford as a portraitist in crayons. The self-taught child was to be no mere freakish whim of a moment's fashion. The name of the little fellow was Thomas Lawrence; and he was one day to sit in the President's chair of the Royal Academy.

The child THOMAS LAWRENCE, born in Bristol on the 4th of May in 1769, was the son of a broken-down attorney, and grandson of a parson — the father, soon after the boy's birth, turned tavern-landlord, and took the "White Lion" Inn at Bristol, but failing as tapster as thoroughly as he had done in the law, and as poetaster, actor, revenue officer, and farmer, he went therefrom to the sign of "The Black Bear" at Devizes, where the child Tommy was wont to be set on a table to recite or to draw portraits — to draw customers. From Devizes our innkeeper had now drifted to Oxford, where the boy Thomas began to win success with portraits in coloured chalks at ten. From Oxford he was to go to Bath, where his pastel portraits were to become quite a vogue.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

IN WHICH A BEAUTIFUL VISION STEPS INTO THE HOME OF GENIUS, AND THE "AGE OF INNOCENCE" IS BORN

THE year 1780 was to bring into the house of Gainsborough one of the few jars that disturbed his family life. He had made much of a hautboy-player, one Johann Christian Fischer, who became attached to Gainsborough's younger daughter Mary; and though the painter disliked the match, he felt it but right to condone the marriage with the irritable and eccentric man of no social position. It turned out the miserable union that Gainsborough had feared; and a few years saw the pair separated. She was one of the two children painted by Gainsborough with such skill, wherein the elder girl is seen with her hand on the younger one's head — that dainty child whose marriage unhinged her mind. She survived the elder unmarried sister Margaret (Gainsborough's "Peggy"), dying in 1825. Both girls indeed were far from sane; and their mother betrayed madness before she died.

The Seventeen-eighties saw Reynolds at the full height of his powers. He painted one masterpiece after another. His portrait

of the little *Marquis of Granby*, clambering over a huge dog, was of the earlier part of these years, which also yielded the famous *Waldegrave Sisters*, daughters of that beautiful Countess of Waldegrave, now Duchess of Gloucester, who were themselves grown up to beautiful womanhood. He painted them for their uncle, Horace Walpole, who grudged the price! The Countess had been born a Walpole. Reynolds also painted her little son, the *Prince William of Gloucester*, in Van Dyck array. A year after, he was painting more pictures of children — the famous *Master Bunbury* and the charming little *Lady Catherine Pelham-Clinton Feeding Chickens* amongst others.

Sir Joshua's fascinating little niece "Offy" Palmer was now grown up, and in this year married Mr. Gwatkin; and we shall soon see Theophila the mother of another "Offy," which Offy Gwatkin was to sit to her great-uncle in one of the last pictures his skilled hands were to create — for Sir Joshua is now on the edge of sixty, and, though he has no foreboding of it, the shadow is to fall before this decade is run out.

Reynolds went for a holiday to Holland, and his quick eyes saw the greatness of the great dead Dutchmen. He came back with an added sense of colour and richness of design.

Opie burst upon the town whilst Reynolds took his holiday; and Reynolds on his return poured out his praises upon the self-taught Cornish boy.

Reynolds on his return from Holland painted the *Sons of Mr. Bromell.* The younger of these boys was to become the famous dandy, "Beau Brummell," he who, having fallen foul of his friend the Regent in after years, on that modish first gentleman of

Europe entering the room where Brummell was lord of the revels and receiving the world of fashion, pretended not to know His Royal Highness, but instead, touching the Prince's friend on the arm as they passed asked, with delightful drawl: "Who's your fat little friend?" . . . . Was ever petty insolence more godlike?

The following year of 1782, Sir Joshua painted the four-year-old *Master Brummell.* At Gainsborough's wish, Reynolds sat to him in the November for his portrait; he had given but one sitting when he was stricken with the palsy, and had to go to Bath for the cure. For some reason, on his return to town, restored to health, Reynolds did not again sit to Gainsborough. He was not again to see the wilful genius whom he so greatly admired for six years, when Gainsborough lay upon his death-bed.

After another visit to Holland, Reynolds painted a portrait of great beauty (you may see it at the Wallace) of the sweet and gentle mother seated in a landscape, her baby boy in her lap, the *Mrs. Richard Hoare and her Infant Son* — one of the supreme works of his hands.

It was in 1782 that there stepped into Romney's studio and into his life the beautiful strange being who was to have so profound an effect upon his career, to raise his art to its fullest achievement, and to set his heart on fire. This girl of nineteen, Amy Lyon, child of Cheshire peasants, passing as Emma Hart, had come early in this year of grace 1782 under the protection of the Honourable Charles Greville, brother of the second Earl of

Warwick of that name, who had set up a house for her in the Edgware Road, with her mother as cook and housekeeper under the pen-name of Mrs. Cadogan. Greville, desiring a portrait of the beautiful girl, brought his mistress to be painted by Romney. Here was the ideal beauty of which the brooding man had all his life been dreaming. He painted her time and time again — loving her each time the more. The jealous Greville seems to have had no suspicion. He had wide social and parliamentary duties and calls upon his time. Emma spent these times at Cavendish Square. To this lonely man of eight-and-forty she came as a vision and a revelation. For three years he was in a seventh heaven. You may look upon him as he was in these years when he was pouring forth masterpieces of his divinity — in that superb self-portrait, unfinished, that hangs in the National Portrait Gallery.

To the Royal Academy of 1783 Gainsborough sent, amongst twenty-six canvases, fifteen portraits of the Royal Family, of which several were of children. (The famous *Duchess of Devonshire* was of this time, and the *Two Shepherd Boys with Fighting Dogs*.) The Royal Academy was never again to display a picture by Gainsborough. The following year of 1784, he sent his great group of George the Third's daughters — and, knowing that much of its charm depended upon its delicacy and subtleties of tone and of handling, he begged that it should be made an exception to the rule whereby no full-length portrait is allowed upon the line, agreeing to have his other pictures placed in inferior places. The Council refused the request; and Gains-

borough, in hot anger, withdrew the whole of his pictures, and no power on earth could again prevail upon him to send another canvas to the displays. From this breach until his death was to be but a short space of four years — years in which he reached to the height of his achievement, *The Cottage Girl with her Dog and Pitcher* and the famous *Mrs. Siddons* being of this period.

Meanwhile Sir Joshua was painting two fine pictures of mothers-and-children, the *Lady Dashwood and Child* and the *Lady Honeywood and Child*. On the death of Allan Ramsay, he was made Painter to the King in his stead. Reynolds was now constantly foul of the other members of the Royal Academy; and the King's dislike of him was scarce concealed.

Death had been busy amongst the friends of Reynolds; Johnson was now taken. The two men had loved each other like brothers.

Reynolds was painting at his best, as though age but increased his powers. Boys and girls appear often in his painting-chair.

In 1785 he painted the much-discussed *Venus* at the National Gallery, better known as *The Snake in the Grass* or as *Cupid Unloosing the Girdle of Venus*, a very rich and glowing example of his art. And about the same time he gave to the world his famous picture of childhood, the master-work of *The Age of Innocence*. The wonderful picture shows Reynolds at the very summit of his powers. Never was little maidenhood set down in more consummate fashion than in this exquisite and masterly canvas. It holds, and deserves to hold, the suffrage of the world.

Velazquez and Hals and others have surpassed in technical handling the craftsmanship of Reynolds; but all their mastery could not yield, and never yielded, the inspiration that breathed into this canvas the subtle and elusive fragrance of this flower of childhood.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN

IN WHICH THE BEAUTIFUL VISION FLITS OUT OF THE PALACE OF ART, AND BLACK CARE ENTERS THEREINTO; AND OF A GREAT RECONCILIATION — AND DEATH

THE paint was wet upon Sir Joshua's canvas of *The Age of Innocence*, when a young fellow of twenty-nine entered his studio who was to reach to high rank in art. HENRY RAEBURN, a young Scots giant, had come to London on his way to Rome with his wife; he was already making a reputation in his native Edinburgh as a portrait-painter; and Reynolds, with wonted kindliness, gave him high encouragement. To Reynolds the big courtly man of culture and refinement would appeal on the social side of him as well as the artistic. It is said that Sir Joshua so greatly admired his work that he advised him to go to Rome — offering to supply the means to do so out of his own pocket if the young giant lacked them — which Raeburn declined, deeply touched by the old artist's offer.

Henry Raeburn, the second son of a mill-owner of Edinburgh, who came of good old Border stock, was born on the 4th of March 1756, the year of Romney's marriage at twenty-two, three years after the thirty-year-old Reynolds had gone to settle in

London town. Left an orphan with his elder brother at an early age by the death of father and mother, the lad Henry was fathered by the manly elder brother William, then only sixteen or eighteen himself, who sent the little fellow of nine to the famous school of Heriot's Hospital. There the boy received the sound education and acquired the old-world courtly manners that stood him in such good stead in the after-years. Taken from school at fifteen (1771), he was apprenticed to a goldsmith, one Gilliland; and at Gilliland's the youth got to painting miniatures. He seems to have been self-taught — to have done it at first just for the love of the thing. By the time he was twenty, the young fellow had passed from miniatures to painting in oils, again self-taught; and in that year Henry Raeburn, encouraged and helped by his kindly master the goldsmith, was getting so many commissions that he was allowed to break through his apprenticeship and devote himself wholly to his art. He rapidly came into favour; and the healthy, high-spirited, genial and cultured Henry was soon on the way to social as well as artistic success. He had only one drawback — he was a comparatively poor man. He mended it. A dainty little lady, a widow, some twelve years his senior, came to sit for her portrait. In a month they were married. Thus, at twenty-two the painter found himself mated to Ann Edgar, widow of one of the Leslies of Balquhan; a stepfather of two girls; and master of a considerable fortune, to say nothing of Deanhaugh House. It was a happy marriage. One of his stepdaughters afterwards became Mrs. Ann Inglis, whose husband, dying in Calcutta, left her with two boys, Henry Raeburn Inglis and Charles James Leslie Inglis,

of whom the elder lad, Raeburn's godson and favourite step-grandson, he was afterwards to paint in his diploma picture on election to the Royal Academy as *A Boy Holding a Rabbit.*

Thenceforth, happy in his home of Deanhaugh, with children growing up about him, in an ever increasing circle of friends of the brilliant, artistic, literary, and patrician society of the Scottish capital, and free from care, Raeburn advanced from masterpiece to masterpiece of portraiture. One of his famous portraits of children, *The Binning Boys*, is of these years.

Whether it were the Thing to Do, or that his ambition ever grew wider with increase of powers, Rome called him, and on his way to Rome with his wife it was that he now stepped into Sir Joshua's studio.

This year that Raeburn stepped into Sir Joshua's studio and saw *The Age of Innocence*, in all its freshness, was a cruel one for "the man in Cavendish Square." For three years his ideal, the beautiful Emma Hart, had sat incessantly to Romney. But Greville was finding a mistress an added burden to his scant credit; and he decided to part with his Emma in the vile and cynical traffic whereby he handed the girl over to his uncle, Sir William Hamilton, English Ambassador at Naples, who was home on leave. In the March of 1786 Emma Hart passed out of Romney's ken, going to Naples with her mother, fretting at leaving Greville, who sent her on the pretext of getting her lessons in singing; by November she was the English Ambassador's acknowledged mistress; five years later he married her. Emma Hart's departure increased Romney's distaste for portraiture; and

he spent and wasted more than ever of his great genius upon "fancy subjects," brooding upon her beauty.

As for Reynolds, he was at work upon the *Infant Hercules;* and soon thereafter created the picture of the *Child with Guardian Angels.* But perhaps the best known of all the creations of Reynolds is the picture of little Frances Gordon, the blue-eyed, golden-haired daughter of Lord William Gordon, her sweet face seen in five different winged heads amongst the clouds, in that famed canvas known wherever the English tongue is spoken as the *Angels' Heads.* This child was niece of Lord George Gordon, the crazy leader of the No-Popery Riots, that caused a fine to-do in Leicester Square as well as over all London.

Many children now sat to Sir Joshua; and into the painting-chair also came again that beautiful Georgina, Duchess of Devonshire, whom he painted as a child with her mother, now herself a mother, and seated with her baby daughter, still another Georgina, the infant Lady Georgina Cavendish, on her lap, the mother amusing the mite in that celebrated canvas that has been reproduced so often. The Duchess has lost nothing of her charm, or her gaiety. Another portrait of a child of the Spencer blood was also of this year — the little fellow in the new-fashioned trousers, short jacket, and sash, the *Viscount Althorp*, big-hatted, in a landscape. John Charles Spencer, Viscount Althorp, born in 1782, — four when Reynolds immortalised him — was the son of the second Earl Spencer, and of the beautiful Lavinia Bingham, his Countess, nephew therefore of the great Duchess of Devonshire. He became the third Earl Spencer in 1834, dying in 1843.

In the November of the year, at the dinner-table of Boydell's

nephew at Hampstead, Romney being present, was planned the "Shakespeare Gallery," to be painted by the great artists of the day and engraved by the great engravers for a sumptuous volume. Romney unfortunately wasted enormous time and labour on his two contributions, *The Tempest*, and the *Infant Shakespeare Attended by the Passions*.

And 1787 saw Henry Raeburn, at thirty-one, return from his two years' stay in Italy, to Edinburgh, to set up his studio in George Street, and to create masterpieces in portraiture in which his study of the great dead shows no influence unless it be that Velazquez had added strength and vigour to his original style. A year after his return, on the death of his brother, he succeeded and moved into St. Bernard's House, where he lived until his death, painting in the George Street studio until he built a larger studio for himself at Raeburn House in York Place in 1795. To him sat nearly every man and woman of note in Scotland. Raeburn did for Scotland what Reynolds was doing for England, happy in his home, his family — a generous host, and an enthusiastic helper of any struggling artist.

This year that Raeburn returned to Edinburgh from his Italian wanderings, the lad Thomas Lawrence, now a stripling of eighteen, who had gone from his ten-year-old portrait-making at Oxford to Bath, entered himself as a student at the Royal Academy. He was to snatch the bays of academic honours from the great Scottish painter.

For Reynolds this year of 1787 was to be rich in portraits of children — the *Lady Smythe and her Children* and the *Lady Harrington and her Children* being of this time. For the "Boydell

Shakespeare" he painted the elfish *Puck* amongst his three contributions. The charming little *Lord Burghersh* hunting a butterfly, and the very beautiful *Virgin and Child* at Petworth, were also of this year, as was the small *Master Yorke*, standing in a landscape with a bird on his fore-arm and a dog at his feet. But the finest achievement of all these many fine things was the superb portrait of little eight-year-old *Miss Ward with her Dog*, in which the girl Anna Maria Ward, daughter of John, Viscount Dudley and Ward, is seen reclining beside a boulder, resting at the foot of a tree, in her large hat and summer dress, playing with her dog. She married Horace St. Paul in 1803 — he was created a baronet in 1813 — and she died on the 26th of January 1837.

A strange story is told of Gainsborough at this time. Being at dinner with Sir George Beaumont and Sheridan, Gainsborough sat silent and in gloom; after a while, taking Sheridan by the hand, and leading him from the room, he said: "Now, don't laugh, but listen: I have less time to live than my looks infer; but for this I care not. What oppresses my mind is this: I have many acquaintances and few friends, and as I wish to have one worthy man to accompany me to the grave, I am desirous of bespeaking you. Will you come? Ay or no?" Sheridan laughed as he promised to do so, whereupon Gainsborough's face cleared of all care, and during the rest of the evening he was the most gay and witty and humorous of the party. But the breath of death had been felt by him.

Reynolds and Gainsborough were both present at the opening of the trial of Reynolds's friend, Warren Hastings, in Westminster

Hall in 1788. Gainsborough, seated near an open window, suddenly felt the touch of an icy hand upon his neck; and on his reaching his home he complained of pain to his wife and niece. On looking at his neck they saw a mark of "about the size of a shilling." The doctor, Sir John Hunter, put it down to a chill; but the swelling so increased that Hunter had to admit it to be malignant. "If this is a cancer, I am a dead man," said Gainsborough; and straightway and calmly set his affairs in order for the end. By the middle of summer the disease had made rapid advance; and, surveying his career as he lay dying, he decided that he had not acted generously towards his great rival. He wrote to Sir Joshua, begging him to come to him, and bid good-bye.

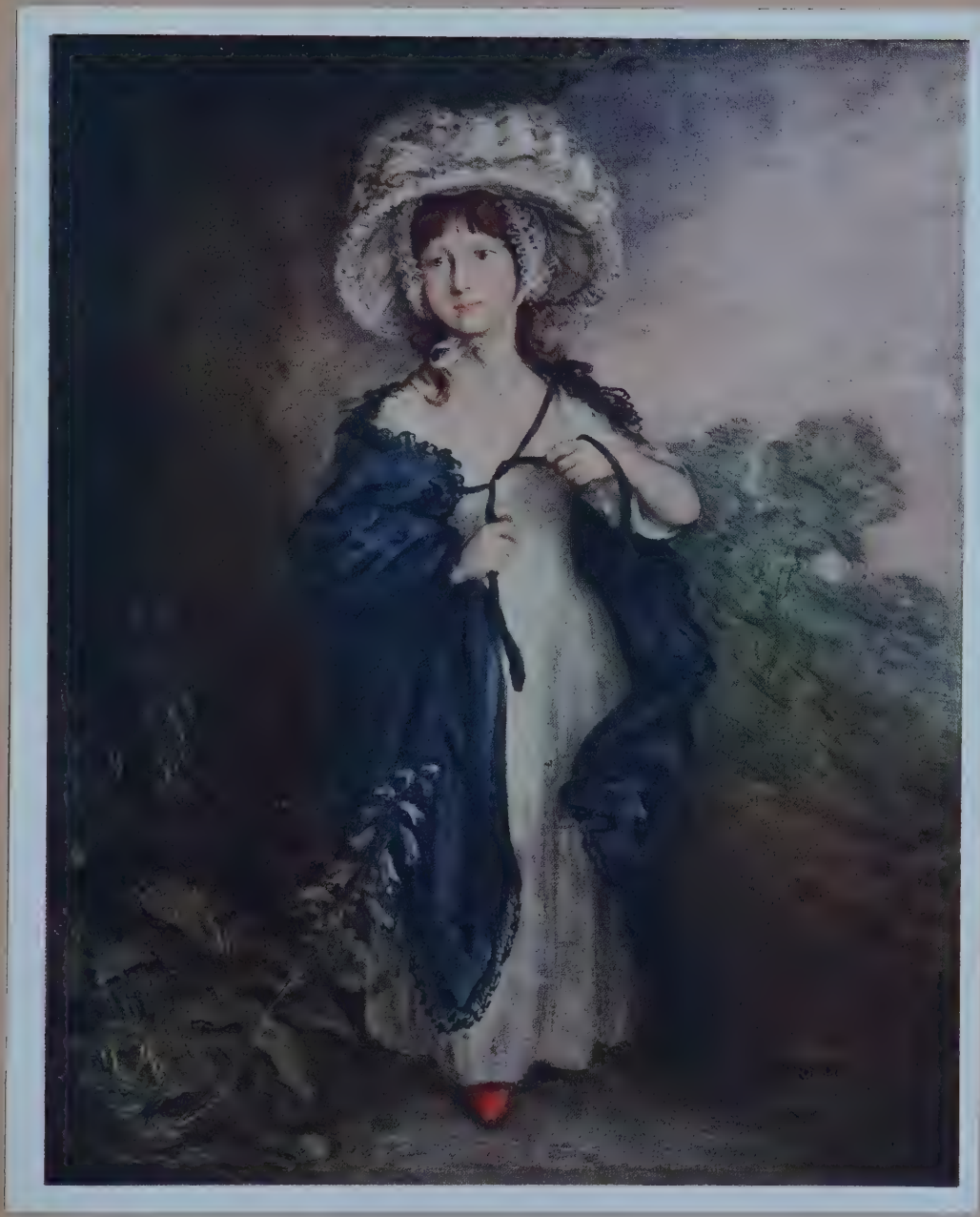
It is pleasant to read of the reconciliation of the two men; all past envies and humiliations and misunderstandings blotted out. Reynolds delivered his great and sane estimate of the other in his *Discourse* of the year, the Fourteenth, summing up his merits and his weaknesses with rare skill and balance and justice, wherein he tells how, as Gainsborough lay dying, he wrote to Reynolds "to express his acknowledgments for the good opinion I entertained of his abilities, and the manner in which, he had been informed, I always spoke of him; and desired he might see me once more before he died."

Reynolds went to him; and at last the gulf between the two men was bridged. By Gainsborough the sense of the coming end to his art was far more keenly felt than the ending of his life; but as Reynolds rose to leave him, Gainsborough added, smiling, "We are all going to heaven, and Van Dyck is of the company."

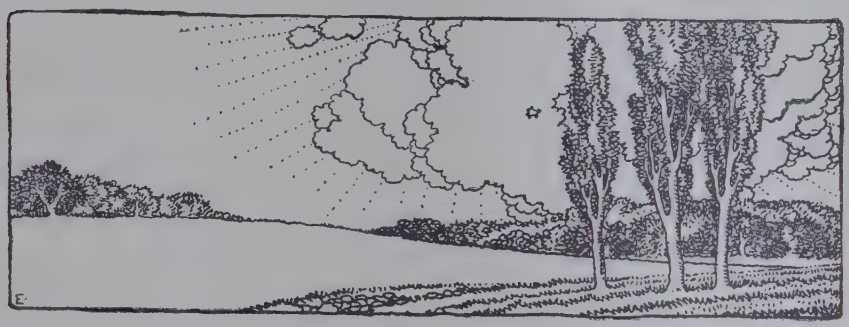
Beautiful Children

Gainsborough died on the 2nd of August 1788, a few days after Sir Joshua left him. Reynolds was one of the pallbearers as they bore the dead man to the churchyard at Kew, and Sheridan followed his dead friend's body to the grave, where Gainsborough's wife was laid ten years afterwards, and where his nephew, Dupont Gainsborough, was to be laid the year before her — he who finished the dead man's unfinished portraits, and to whom it is certain that several portraits attributed to Gainsborough are due.

Gainsborough painted fewer children than Reynolds; but with what exquisite skill he rendered the subtle charm of girlhood may be seen in his masterpiece of *Miss Haverfield;* and in the famous group of *The Baillie Family* he caught with wondrous spirituality the fascination of the little ones.



CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT



OF A GREAT SHADOW THAT FALLS, AND OF THE DUSK, AND OF ONE GROPING IN THE DARKNESS, AND A MIGHTY WRECKAGE

AS Reynolds stepped out of Gainsborough's room, the cloud was gathering on his own horizon, though he little guessed it. He was to be granted but a short twelve-month more of vision.

He painted that year *A Girl Sleeping* and that little mouse-hunting child, the weird uncanny *Muscipula*, her shrewd little face aglee, and carrying a mouse in a trap, with the avenging cat in attendance. Cruelty in a child is an ugly thing; nor is the little mouse-hunter a pleasant masterpiece.

Upon his easel this year was *The Gleaners*, of which the beautiful girl in the midst of the scene, she who carries a sheaf of corn on her head, has interest, in that she was to be the mother of Sir Edwin Landseer. Amongst other children who sat for him was *Master Hoare*, better known by the engraving entitled *The Little Gardener*, whom we saw five years before as the sturdy baby in the great canvas of *Mrs. Hoare and Infant Son*.

In the July he painted the famous portrait of the dainty child in big mob-cap, the pensive little mite who sits with folded arms in the memory of us all as *Penelope Boothby* — the winsome mite doomed to an early death. She was six when Reynolds painted her; she died soon afterwards. Penelope was the only child of Sir Brooke Boothby, the exquisite and dandy.

The group of boys *Lord Grantham and Brothers* followed.

The year 1789 brought Madness stepping across the threshold of the palace of the King, who entered into that long and lingering death in life that was his affliction for thirty years.

It was the year that Reynolds painted the young singer *Miss Billington as St. Cecilia*, with her choir of angels. It was the year he was to complete his last famous canvas of childhood; and as he had begun his consummate achievement in the portrayal of childhood with his little niece Offy Palmer as *The Strawberry Girl*, so he was now to end it with her daughter Offy Gwatkin as *Simplicity*.

Sir Joshua was sitting before his last canvas, the portrait of a child, little Miss Russell, on Monday the thirteenth of the July of 1789, a year after Gainsborough had passed away, when darkness fell upon his left eye; and in that tragic hour as he laid down his palette and brushes, and little Miss Russell stepped from the painting-seat, he knew that his painting was done. With that orderly habit of his life, so typical of the man's self-discipline, he opened his pocket-book and wrote against the engagement-entry *Miss* —— the simple words, "Prevented by my eye beginning to be obscured," which meant death to his career.

"There is now," he writes to Sheridan, "an end of the pursuit; the race is over whether it is lost or won."

There is something majestic in the calm dignity with which, quietly and without complaint, Reynolds accepted this last of his many afflictions. He was fortunately well-to-do and free from money-cares; but his art had been the breath of life to him. Fortunate in the number of his friends — to them he turned, a welcome guest. His large generosity to his kin was now amply repaid. His niece Mary Palmer devoted herself to him; was his constant companion, his solace; wrote for him; read to him; and arranged his home and his hospitalities for him.

Blindness came upon him apace; but his calm fortitude never forsook him. Squabbles with the Academy alone disfigured the remaining years of his life; but on his sending in his resignation they made their peace with him and persuaded him to remain. In his last and Fifteenth *Discourse* he bade his farewell to them, uttering his great tribute to Michelangelo, whose name was the last word spoken by him within its walls.

He could no longer see to paint pictures; deaf and almost blind, he would wander with hands outstretched in the deepening gloom amongst the pictures that had been his life, and be content with dusting them.

But death was at hand. On the evening of Thursday the 23rd of the February of 1792, in his sixty-ninth year, Sir Joshua Reynolds slept into eternity.

In that splendid funeral given to his honour, when they bore him to St. Paul's Cathedral at the royal command, the nation paid him but his just tribute; and Turner knew the greatness of the

man when he willed in his last testament that he should be laid to rest "as close as possible" beside him.

All that Reynolds touched turned to gold. He was a fortunate man in all his enterprises. To Offy's elder sister, his niece Mary Palmer, he left a hundred thousand pounds. She, thus dowered, became Marchioness of Thomond. She lived until 1820, dying the same year as George the Third; "Offie" her sister lived into the Victorian age, dying an old lady of ninety in 1843.

Romney went for a visit to Paris the year before Reynolds died; he came back to London to waste his strength on the "Boydell Shakespeare." These "fancy subjects" tore his body and soul and will and mind to pieces. He came back with a mind distressed — restless — a slave to depression.

The summer brought respite. One fine morning a beautiful vision lit his studio — the radiant Emma, with news that she was about to become Lady Hamilton: she flung her arms round her beloved artist's neck, and kissed him in the presence of her lord, standing by.

Life came back to Romney. All the earth was gladness once more. He was soon painting her as *Bacchante*. He is torn with the dread that she was cold to him at parting a while. Suddenly she appears again — the old Emma, joyous, laughing, talking, radiant, divine. Romney is at once himself again. "Thou more than father" indeed!

Emma, the pet of society, honoured by royalty, a welcome guest to the houses of the nobility, was married on the 6th of September, and left with her lord for Naples. Welcomed by the

Queen of Naples, and idolised by the Court, she yet found time to write to Romney affectionately and in appalling grammar and worse spelling — *h*'s dropped, plurals agreeing with nominatives singular. But the light had gone out — Romney fell into despair again, and restlessness grew upon him. He began to form fantastic plans. His health broke down. He vexed himself with schemes for "fancy pictures." The "Boydell Shakespeare" was his ruin. The twilight was deepening. The great studio in Cavendish Square was stocked and littered with unfinished canvases. He suddenly took a dislike to the place. He began to build a great gallery to his Kilburn studio, Pine-Apple Place — ordered copies of the great classical statues from young Flaxman in Rome, whom he had befriended and started on his sculptor's career.

Romney was at the head of his profession, without rival — it bored him. London, which he had hungered for but thirty years ago, was now hideous. Success was barren — riches an emptiness. He could settle nowhere.

In 1795, during a gleam of his old wizardry, he painted *Lord Egremont's Family*. In 1796 his intellect was shadowed by the coming madness. He broke his engagements with sitters; brooded the livelong day upon his "palace of art." His son just prevented him from signing a deed to purchase four acres of land in the Edgware Road for the building of the palace; he was tactfully persuaded to buy instead a house at Hampstead. In the midst of wild buildings and schemings and extravagance thereat, encouraged by the egregious Hayley, he suddenly left, and went north to his home with his son; returned again, his mind more

unhinged. He sold his house in Cavendish Square to Shee, afterwards President of the Academy. His pictures and casts were taken to his gallery and flung about the place, many of the canvases being ruined by being left in the rain. In the last year of the Seventeen-hundreds a voice called within him.

Alone, without a word to a living soul, Romney crept out of that fantastic home that he had built upon Hampstead Hill, and made his way north to Kendal, to the grey-headed wife who had waited for him all these thirty-seven years since the young fellow took horse for London town — she who had helped him with carefully-hoarded guineas sent to him in the sealing-wax upon his letters, the once prétty Mary.

She took him in and comforted his wild wits, and brought peace to him in his darkness. She who had withdrawn herself from his ambitions, and knew no day of the brightness of his great triumphs, now watched over the clouded evening of his days.

Romney died, hopelessly insane, on the 15th of November 1802; and was buried in the God's-acre of that Dalton-in-Furness that had bred him. He died a miserable, broken man, who had achieved his ambition to be great. He had sacrificed all else for that; and he ate of the bitter fruit of ambition that is centred in Self. Success was but the fruit of Dead Sea apples in his mouth. Happiness goes to them that give themselves to their fellows; not to them that take. Romney came to a London where on every hand were splendid friendships for the asking; he lived alone; could find in her splendours but a desert, sus-

picious of every friendly advance, unable to see in honest criticism aught but an enmity — the tool and victim by consequence of any flattering tongue. But he shares with Reynolds the honour of painting the children of his age with sincerity and with consummate skill.

CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE

WHICH HAS TO DO WITH THE JOCKEYING OF THE GREAT BY THE LESSER GREAT, AND THE BAYS ON THE LESSER SKULL

IN the year that blindness struck at the art of Reynolds, the young Thomas Lawrence, in his twenty-first year, painted his masterpiece of *Miss Farren*, afterwards Countess of Derby; and, at a stride, stepped into fame. He was elected an Associate of the Academy the following year; on the death of Sir Joshua he was made Painter to the King; by twenty-five he was a full Academician.

In far Edinburgh, about 1810, Raeburn seems to have turned his thoughts to leaving the Scottish capital and settling in London. It would have been a severe loss to Northern art; but his triumph in London would have been secure. His vogue in Scotland was very great. He was in London, looking for a house in the May of the year; consulting Wilkie as to whether he had "any prospect of establishing himself." But the Academy was torn with jealousies and bickerings; the portrait-painters dreaded his rivalry; and Lawrence, with self-seeking cunning and bland pretensions of guarding the great Northerner's interests, strongly

urged him to stay in Edinburgh. Raeburn had been exhibiting at the Royal Academy for eighteen years without honour or recognition. He was no longer young . . . . He sadly turned north again; and left Lawrence master of the field. Lawrence could now write with exultation: "The death of Hoppner leaves me without a rival."

In 1814, the Academy, feeling that Raeburn was now safely settled in Edinburgh again, made him an Associate; and in the year following — the year of Waterloo — he was elected full Academician; and Lawrence was knighted. It was six years before he sent, in 1821, to the Academy his diploma picture of his step-grandson, *The Boy with a Rabbit.* Lawrence had been elected President of the Royal Academy in 1819.

But the great Scotsman was not yet done with honours. The King, George the Fourth, coming to Edinburgh in 1822, sent for Raeburn and knighted him — indeed, so charmed with the dignity and bearing and courtly manners of the big man was he that he would have made him a baronet, but was dissuaded therefrom owing to the fact that Reynolds had only been knighted. The following year, however, Raeburn was appointed "the King's Limner and Painter in Scotland." The King desired a portrait by Raeburn; but it was not to be. Sir Henry Raeburn was now sixty-eight; he was engaged upon a portrait when, to his distress, he lost sight of the canvas on which he was at work, which swam before him and changed its aspect. He went for a long excursion with a party in the summer — of which were Miss Edgworth and Sir Walter Scott — to view historic ruins and places in Fifeshire: the fatigue and the heat of the sun wearied

him; on the day of his return to his studio in York Place he began to work upon a half-length portrait of Sir Walter Scott, but was baffled by it and had to give it up; he walked home, his head aching, and went to his bed, from which he never rose again. For a week he lay dying, passing away on the 8th of July 1823. His body was laid in an unmarked grave in the east end of St. John's Church in Princes Street!—his widow outliving him ten years.

Lawrence was soon so largely helped by pupils, and his art was become so trivial, that his later work bears no comparison in technical excellence with the masterpieces of his younger years. However, whether we take his earlier or his later period, his treatment of childhood stands out as being of the height of his achievement. Lawrence died on the 7th of January 1830, being buried with great pomp in St. Paul's Cathedral, seven years before Queen Victoria came to rule over us; and during the thirty years of his painting he was as greatly in the vogue for the portraiture of the fashionable folk as his great predecessor Reynolds had been in the age before him. Of the many fine pictures of children painted by him, one of the most famous is the *Master Lambton*, in which the poetic seven-year-old boy (the Honourable Charles William Lambton, son of the first Lord Durham by his second marriage with the daughter of the second Earl Grey) appears much older than his age, though this is not wholly due to Lawrence's wonted affectation of pose for his portraits of children, as the handsome patrician little fellow was a thoughtful child beyond his years. He was not destined to succeed to the title, dying the year after his painter.

Beautiful Children

Lawrence, whatever his affectations and poses, painted children, in spite of the sentimentality which he inflicted upon them, astounding well; and he himself seems to have realised his strength, for he chose his canvas of the *Calmady Children* as being the masterpiece by which he most desired to be remembered — a portrait perhaps better known from the engraving as *Nature* — though it is difficult to know why he gave it the preference over the fine *Countess Gower and Child* or the *Master Lambton*, unless it were a confession that at least it was his portrait of children freest from pose or sentimentality. As famous as the *Master Lambton*, indeed more widely known, is that rich-hued and glowing colour-scheme in the National Gallery known as the *Child with a Kid* — or as often called *A Boy with a Kid*, and the mistake is forgiveable — the fair-haired child happened to have been a girl. But the little peasant with bare legs and feet, and in ragged clothes, does not mislead on closer scrutiny, for the deception of the part played is scarcely carried out when we regard the well-bred, handsome child with attention — aristocrat is written over all — she was the five-year-old little Lady Georgina Fane.

Whether Lawrence idealised the beauty of the children he painted — and he painted many — it must be allowed that the children of the age of the First Gentleman in Europe were remarkably comely; and whatever sins of prettiness of technique may be laid to the charge of the painter, at least, in his presentment of children the sense of beauty was appropriately and justly uttered.

CHAPTER THIRTY

WHEREIN THE CHILD SITS ENTHRONED

THE painting of childhood rose to so important a part of the art activity of the Seventeen-hundreds, that it has been essayed as an almost essential part in the career of all portrait-painting since; and the whole art achievement of the nineteenth century, whether in France or England, in Germany or Holland, or elsewhere, has concerned itself with the real Child.

The men of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood reverenced the child as child; and JOHN EVERETT MILLAIS created some of his finest canvases in stating childhood. Millais entered into his full rank of Academician in 1864, about the time that he put the experiments of Pre-Raphaelitism from him, and gave scope to the virile genius that urged his brush to fuller statement of his art. He realised that art must go forward; not back. It was revealed to him that Velazquez had created a greater art than the Pre-Raphaelite primitives of Italy. The picture of his little daughter in *The Minuet* shows him at the parting of the ways. In 1868 he gave to the world his *Souvenir of Velazquez*, in which he boldly leaves behind him all that for which he had striven, and

the bold forthright handling, the impressionism, and the vigour and force of statement thrust him forward as a master. Velazquez has conquered; Millais has passed from the exquisite style of his great masterpiece *Ophelia* to a superb style in which he created no more masterly portrait than this subtle study of a little Victorian girl.

Amongst the many famous portraits of children that followed were *The Convalescent*, the *Princes in the Tower*, the *Cherry Ripe*, painted in rivalry with Reynolds's *Penelope Boothby*, the *My First Sermon* and *My Second Sermon*, the *Flood*, and the like; though the beautiful *Blind Girl* of the earlier method gives place to nothing in its haunting beauty of statement.

The British kin across the seas have continued the splendid tradition. WHISTLER, when he was done with dipping his brushes in the paint-pots of alien peoples, and had written with witty and exquisite phrasing his futile booklet on art to mislead the amateur and to the bemuddling of the critics, "found himself" in the lyrical utterance of painting that made of colour an exquisite music, which stirs the emotions through the sight as violins subtly played do quicken the senses through the hearing. And it is perhaps the supreme achievement of all his wondrous wizardry that he painted one of the supreme masterpieces the world has known in his portrait of little *Miss Alexander*. Here we have the type-child of the Victorian age — a very Alice stepped out of Wonderland — the subtle fragrance and the delicate atmosphere of young maidenhood stated with a power of emotional statement that raises Whistler to the heights. With what skill he caught the pretty awkwardness of the "awkward age"! The

whole thing melts and moves in the surrounding ether, which is suggested as skilfully in terms of colour as the solid substances are declared in colour-values bathed in their right distance of atmosphere; whilst the exquisite beauty of the brushwork, and the astoundingly tuneful employment of the floating paint, complete the wizardry of the thing. The famous portrait of Carlyle was being painted at the time; and Carlyle, suffering greatly from the long and many weary sittings demanded by Whistler, one day met the child going into the studio; putting his hand on her head, he said sadly: "Puir thing — puir thing!"

JOHN SINGER SARGENT, supreme in the portraiture of our day, has evolved an original and personal art so wide in its enterprise, so large and searching in its vision, that it has not passed by the limning of the Child. Stevenson, who ever surrendered at the first challenge to the utterance of the out-of-the-way word, could find no more comprehensive attribute for the might of Sargent's artistry than the ineffectual affectation coined in his phrase of "witty touch"; the which were as though one summed the achievement of Shakespeare in tragedy according to the volume of its laughter. We are apt to weigh artistic values by the scales of bookish men — they control the printed word. In a hundred years, when the world, with wonted intellectual snobbery, looks back upon the wide and astounding adventure of Sargent in the realm of art, something like a tolerable estimate may have been written; and in that estimate must be recorded his superb and all too rare statement of the reality of childhood. The nation is fortunate in possessing that picture by him in which he has set down the Modern Child in all the frank joyousness of lighting

Japanese lanterns amidst the ordered wilderness of a garden, in *Carnation Lily, Lily Rose.* Here we have that right and fitting employment of colour, used like music in jocund measure, stated with blithe bravura, telling with rich and resonant gaiety of hues the joy of life of childhood — as music in its most tripping measure could not more aptly orchestrate it. And it is well to judge Sargent's vision of childhood by this happy achievement rather than by his other delightful and sedate, and far too rare, portraits of the offspring of the rich or noble houses; for, of a truth, just as the greatly rich parents of children are concerned in trying to make their winsome little ones pass as good company for the Princesses of Velazquez, so Sargent has in some measure been hampered in the painting of their modernity by stating their pretence. One recalls a delightful child in all the splendid discomfort of striped full skirt outflowing from a waist just below the little armpits, as she stands beside a great bird-cage. Even the dainty little *The Honourable Laura Lister* is only "holding herself in" until the painting is done, putting up with the tyranny of the Olympian Grown-Ups in making her walk, splendidly ridiculous, within the stilted prison-walls of that preposterous skirt, but to keep them in good humour.

Indeed, the genius of our American kindred is largely concerning itself with this glorification of childhood. Children over seas are out to "have a good time." Cecilia Beaux, one of the greatest woman-painters the world has yet seen, has created masterpiece after masterpiece in the portrayal of childhood and infancy; there is everywhere this deep concern in the picturesqueness, romance, and character of children; and not least is it bearing

beautiful blossom in the art of women — Sarah Stillwell, Jessie Willcox Smith, Elizabeth Shippen Green, and others.

It is a splendid inheritance from the great ones of the Seventeen-hundreds; whose eyes were opened to the vision by the giants of the Sixteen-hundreds, when childhood began to be painted for its own sake by the forthright hand of sympathy, guided by the seeing eye, that shed tradition and looked upon the truth and uttered it.